



Human Resources Development Canada

EVALUATION OF THE CHILD CARE INITIATIVES FUND

Overview Report

**Evaluation and Data Development
Strategic Policy
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Finally, we thank the consultants from Norpark Research Consultants Inc. who were responsible for the collection and analysis of data.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Child Care Initiatives Fund (CCIF) was established in 1988 "to monitor, promote, (and) encourage quality child care in Canada by funding innovative research and development projects."

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) undertook an evaluation of CCIF in 1994/ 95. This report presents a summary of the results of the evaluation.

EVALUATION DESIGN

The evaluation focuses on three main areas: the continuing relevance of the program in current circumstances; the impact and effects of CCIF in terms of what it was expected to achieve; and alternatives to CCIF.

To address the evaluation issues, several sources of information were used : a review of the literature; an analysis of administrative data; interviews with key informants; case studies; a survey of project representatives; and a peer review of research projects.

PROFILE

A component of the 1987 National Strategy on Child Care, the Child Care Initiatives Fund was established in 1988 for a seven year period ending on March 31, 1995. CCIF was conceived "to encourage and evaluate innovation and to enhance the development of approaches and services as they relate to child day care issues across Canada" (Health and Welfare Canada, 1991). Originally CCIF was allocated \$98 million, but this was subsequently reduced by \$12 million.

As of November, 1994, CCIF had funded 515 child care projects. A total of 401 organizations had received funding for CCIF projects. The bulk of contributions funding went to associations/societies or educational institutions. Aboriginal bands, Aboriginal associations and Tribal councils sponsored 16% of the projects.

A large majority of projects (72%) were development projects intended to create educational materials, or for staff training/professional development. Demonstration projects -- addressing innovative approaches to child care provision, or adapting child care programs and services to meet community needs -- accounted for most of the rest. Only 5% of projects were classified as research, although this excludes needs assessments (which were not classified as research by CCIF). Research projects received 9% of all CCIF funding.

CCIF was mandated to address specified "priority areas" with its funding. Professional development was a priority of about a third of the projects. Nearly one in five projects had a parent/ public education focus. Aboriginal peoples were the priority for about 20% of the projects.

The most prevalent activity undertaken by CCIF projects was exploring models of service (28%). Almost equal proportions of projects were categorized as needs assessments (17%), creating resource materials (16%), networking (15%), or training (15%).

Average CCIF funding across all projects was \$150,360. Project funding ranged from \$1,000 to \$1.2 million.

MAIN FINDINGS

It is important to note that almost everyone we spoke to rated CCIF very highly in most regards. Still, many -- including CCIF staff -- also pointed out areas of weakness. Given their stake in child care and in CCIF, we took these criticisms seriously. This is not meant to diminish the very positive feedback we received from all quarters on CCIF. Rather, it recognizes that an evaluation is much more valuable if it tells policy makers what needs improving, and why it is important to improve.

Continued Relevance of a Federal Role in Child Care

The evidence argues for a demonstrated need for continued federal intervention in child care research and development. The original impetus for the program -- a need for more quality child care -- remains in force; informants asserted that there is a lot left to accomplish in the area. No other program -- federal, provincial or municipal -- duplicates the activities of CCIF, so it is easy to conclude that if the federal government ceases CCIF activities, no other program could fill the gap. Finally, most informants were adamant that a federal withdrawal would be "devastating." The infrastructure built could crumble.

Project Outcomes

For most goals, the majority of project representatives felt they totally achieved their goals. For every goal, at least 80% said it was totally or partially achieved.

Final reports accounted for 63% of the end products, publications for 32%, and audio-video products for only 5% of projects. The plurality (25%) of end products focused on professional development/training of child care staff. About 12% were aimed at parent education, and 12% were research reports or publications. End products of some projects were adjudged very useful, principally for service providers. Some end products, particularly national research studies, were considered to be valuable input into the child care policy-making process. Some informants thought that the full potential of end products was not being realized because of inadequate dissemination. Survey results suggest that most products/services have been used by others beyond the original project.

One factor that has limited the usefulness of CCIF projects is that there has never been an overall analysis of CCIF projects. There is a synopsis of projects in a catalogue of resources.

According to those who returned a project self-evaluation, 85% of all projects survived the end of funding. Buttressing this, 85% of demonstration projects surveyed continued delivering services after CCIF funding expired. Thus, the short-term survival rate is

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impressive. Within one year, 54% were still operating. By the time the CCIF program ended, 46% of demonstration projects were still in operation.

Program Impacts

The various lines of evidence indicate that CCIF has been successful in boosting the quality of child care in Canada, albeit indirectly. It has also been effective in increasing awareness of available resources.

On the other hand, CCIF was said to have had little impact in improving availability/ accessibility of child care, but then this was not part of its direct mandate. Furthermore, it has only "scratched the surface" in augmenting the stock of research into child care, having funded only two or three dozen research projects. Several of these studies have made a positive contribution to knowledge about some facets of child care in Canada, but there remains much to explore.

Findings were more equivocal in the areas of impact on child care infrastructure and new models of service. On the former, it seems fair to conclude that CCIF activities have helped to create and sustain child care organizations, to build a network of agencies and individuals involved in child care, to increase community awareness, to increase sharing of ideas and information, and to enhance the professionalism of child care staff. If infrastructure is considered to be development of specialized services, ongoing financing, and staffing or consolidation of services in child care, the impact of CCIF has been modest. As for models of service, the evidence available does not permit us to reconcile the two opposing viewpoints: "this was CCIF's forte," versus a lot was attempted but little of lasting relevance eventuated.

The most cited strengths and weaknesses of the program may be construed as opposite sides of the same coin. CCIF's flexibility allowed it to cast its net as wide as possible in search of ways to improve child care in Canada. But the lack of policy direction impaired its ability to identify and focus on the areas most in need of improvement. CCIF was reactive: It did little or nothing to identify knowledge gaps or service needs and direct funding to those areas.

CCIF Operations

CCIF was given high marks for being responsive to requests for information. Beyond this, however, many informants were critical of CCIF's record of proactive dissemination of project results. For example, over a third of project representatives surveyed considered that CCIF had been ineffective in this area. Some interviewees also noted that the only way they would get a report was if they just happened to find out about it and asked for it.

Because there has been no systematic analysis of past projects and because distribution of project results is haphazard, the potential for duplication of effort is high. Moreover, CCIF had no systematic procedures for preventing it (e.g., CCIF staff did not make use of the computer system to prevent duplication). Some evidence of duplication was uncovered: most importantly, 20% of peer review projects were considered to duplicate existing work.

On monitoring, again the message seems to be that CCIF was reactive. To be sure, CCIF staff were complimented for the help they gave to projects: they helped mold the proposals, visited project sites and gave helpful advice when asked. But how good staff were at discovering problems without being asked is open to question. It was suggested that monitoring of projects was lax in general.

Extant Gaps in Knowledge

All informants attested that there are still a lot of gaps in information. CCIF staff said there is a need to do more evaluation of the current services, programs and practices -- whether they are appropriate and cost-effective and whether they meet the need. Research needs to be done in the determinants of quality care, standards of care, quality of child care services in disadvantaged areas, school-based care, and in special groups such as infant/toddler care. There needs to be more studies around employer practices, leave, family/work balance, self-employment, non-traditional hours and the impact they will have on child rearing and what services can meet those non-traditional needs. More knowledge is needed regarding comprehensive services and there is a need to know how commercial child care compares with non-profit. According to the

provinces, the principal area in which more knowledge is needed was said to be "quality."

Alternatives

Most informants thought that a program such as CCIF was the best mechanism by which the issues and needs of promoting quality child care may be addressed. They agreed that CCIF played a necessary and valuable role during its seven year mandate, but it is now time to move on. CCIF must build on the experience they have amassed.

Suggestions for Successor Program

As CCIF staff pointed out, the federal government should build on the experience amassed by CCIF. A new program should be more proactive and more focused on research. Target areas should be determined after a review of what has been achieved and where the gaps are. Among the interviewees' suggestions for appropriate issues to target -- training curricula, research, flexible models of child care, information sharing, conferences, and building infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

The primary conclusion deriving from this evaluation is that CCIF was successful in achieving its mandate. It spawned innovative approaches and services in order to improve the quality of child care in Canada. This was evident from the results of the interviews, survey, peer review and case studies. It is important to add, however, that the stability of the infrastructure CCIF created is uncertain: some thought it would crumble if the federal government abandoned the field.

Almost every one of the hundreds of people surveyed or interviewed had high praise for the program, its mission, its people and its accomplishments. This sentiment should be tempered with the knowledge that many of those contacted may have a vested interest

in the continuation of a program like CCIF; but the virtually unanimous praise the program has evoked is impressive.

CCIF did have some problems, however, mostly related to its operations. There was no concerted effort to determine what areas needed attention most; there was no analysis of past projects to maximize potential learning from the projects funded. "CCIF was reactive." Efforts at disseminating project results were criticized as insufficient by many informants. The potential for duplication was high since there were no systematic means of preventing it, and monitoring was said to be lax.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE EVALUATION OF THE CHILD CARE INITIATIVES FUND (CCIF)

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) management would like to thank those individuals who participated in the evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund (CCIF). Overall, we feel the evaluation is generally supportive of the CCIF. It is gratifying to know that almost every one of the hundreds of people surveyed or interviewed had high praise for the program, its missions its people and its accomplishment.

The primary conclusions from the evaluation are that the CCIF has played a pivotal role in laying the foundation for improved quality child care in Canada through its extensive support in building a strong infrastructure. It was also very effective in increasing the awareness of available resources throughout Canada.

Evaluation findings also determine that CCIF activities have helped to create and sustain child care organizations, build a network of agencies and individuals involved in child care, increase community awareness, increase sharing of ideas and information, and enhance the development of partnerships that involved community groups, professional associations, union locals, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, government, Indian bands, tribal councils and native associations.

We are pleased that the results of the evaluation supports a demonstrated need for continued federal support in child care research and development. The federal government has addressed this need through the creation of Child Care Visions (CCV) which was approved by Treasury Board April 1, 1995. The primary objective of CCV is to support research and evaluation activities that study the adequacy, outcomes and cost-effectiveness of current best child care practices and service delivery models.

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The structure of CCV includes a Technical Advisory Committee, appointed by the Minister and consisting of experts in the child care field. The mandate of the Committee is to provide expert advice on priorities for funding. These will be based on the issues in service areas in child care most in need of further investigation and new solutions.

There are two areas of the evaluation that management would like to address. The first is the CCIF's inadequate dissemination of final products. It is important to note that the CCIF never intended to disseminate final products, this was the responsibility of the project sponsor. However, administrators of the program did recognize this as a weakness in the program's design. As a result, different approaches were implemented to improve the situation. Some of these included attempting to enhance dissemination plans prior to project approval, attending child care conferences where end products were displayed and disseminated, and promoting the inclusion of project outlines in various child care publications.

The second area pertains to project duplication. The program was not able to find any factual evidence to support this statement. We do agree that some projects may have similarities in the overall project design. However, this does not suggest duplication of projects, it simply indicates common child care needs across Canada which may have resulted in comparable project activities.

In conclusion, the evaluation confirms that the CCIF played an integral part in advancing child care in Canada. The results of the evaluation provides an excellent opportunity to ensure the continued effectiveness of Child Care Vision. All of the recommendations resulting from the evaluation will be considered by management and staff of the Employability and Social Partnerships Division.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the 1980s it became widely recognized that the current licensed child care system was not very successful in meeting the needs of certain children and their families. For example, families with infants and school-aged children often found it difficult to find appropriate care, as did families whose children had unusual needs (e.g., sick children, disabled children), or needed special services (e.g., extended hours of care, emergency care). In addition, certain groups of Canadians found it difficult to find suitable licensed care for their children (e.g., rural or remote families, Aboriginal/First Nations groups, and certain multicultural groups).

Families encountered these problems because licensed child care for the most part was designed to meet the needs of children two to six years of age, who needed care during normal working hours, Monday through Friday. Moreover, licensed child care often was not available in rural or remote communities. Hence the accessibility of child care was identified as a critical issue in the 1980s.

Another emerging theme of that decade was an increased concern about quality of care. Evidence accumulated showing that children's development can be affected by the quality of care they receive (e.g., Howes, 1988; Howes & Olenick, 1986; Phillips, McCartney, & Sears, 1987; Ruopp, Travers, Glantz & Coelen, 1979). The impacts under investigation vary from study to study, but have been shown to include aspects of the cognitive, social, and emotional development of children.

Given the themes that were emerging in child care in the last decade it is perhaps not surprising that the Child Care Initiatives Fund (CCIF), established in 1988, focused on developing innovative services and improving the quality of child care. As set out in the Treasury Board Terms and Conditions, CCIF has as its mandate the "development of innovative approaches and services in order to improve the quality of child care in Canada" (Terms of Reference).

At the end of its mandate, and with child care still an important policy issue, the time was appropriate for a thorough evaluation of CCIF. The purpose of the evaluation was "to demonstrate through empirical evidence, where available, *whether in fact CCIF has*

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contributed to improvements in the accessibility and quality of child care in Canada, and if so, to what extent, and in what specific areas of need" (Terms of Reference). This report presents an overview of the results¹.

The document is structured as follows. Part 1, comprising chapters 2 and 3, sets the context for the evaluation by describing the evaluation and presenting a summary of the program -- its rationale and objectives. Part 2 presents the evaluation results, organized into chapters by key themes. The last chapter draws conclusions and summarizes our responses to the evaluation questions.

¹ The results were initially reported in a series of technical reports addressing the findings from the various methodologies used in the evaluation. This report summarizes and integrates the detailed findings presented in the technical reports. All technical reports form part of this evaluation report and are available separately from Program Evaluation Branch, HRDC.

PART 1

Setting the Context

CHAPTER TWO: EVALUATION ISSUES AND METHODS

This chapter considers the types of evaluation issues that were addressed and the methods used to answer those issues.

2.1 Evaluation Issues

The Terms of Reference specified 34 evaluation questions. Following the general guidelines of the Office of the Controller General, the issues were of four broad types: relevance, program results, achievement of objectives, and possible alternatives.

Program Relevance

Under this category of issues, the main focus is on the continuing relevance of the program in current circumstances. Do the mandate and objectives of the program make sense under current conditions?

Program Results

Here the emphasis is on what CCIF accomplished. How were funds and projects distributed? Were results widely disseminated? Were the findings applied beyond the original project? What lessons were learned?

Achievement of Objectives

The focus under this heading is on the impact CCIF has had. Has the program achieved what was expected?

Program Alternatives

The primary focus here is to determine whether there are better ways of achieving the results. What would happen in the absence of CCIF?

2.2 Overall Conceptual Approach

This evaluation used several different methods to determine the effectiveness of CCIF in achieving its mandate. Although the number and type of methods used in analysis varied across issues, most were investigated using three or more methods. The advantages of using multiple lines of evidence are that each issue is examined from several perspectives and that one can have greater confidence in the reliability and validity of the findings should multiple lines of evidence converge. When different methods yielded inconsistent or puzzling results (a rare occurrence), alternative interpretations were considered.

2.3 Methods

To address the evaluation issues, the evaluation used the following methodologies: a review of the literature; an analysis of administrative data; interviews; case studies; a survey of project sponsors; and a peer review of selected projects.

This section presents an overview of the methods used in the evaluation.

2.3.1 Literature Review

A succinct review of child care issues and initiatives was undertaken during the early stages of the evaluation to provide a theoretical framework for analysis. The review attempted to summarize the literature in three major areas: child care in Canada (including availability, affordability and quality), models of child care, and rationale for government intervention in child care.

2.3.2 Analysis of Administrative Data

Child Care Initiatives Fund (CCIF) data were analyzed to draw a profile of the program and its projects. Data were drawn from the Contribution Information System (CIS) computer files, and covered the period from the inception of the program to the fall of 1994. The main purposes were to determine which types of projects were funded by CCIF up to November 1994, the primary activities of projects, which groups were targeted, the amount and duration of funding, etc.

2.3.3 Survey of Project Sponsors

The survey of representatives from projects funded by CCIF collected the opinions of respondents about the relevance of the CCIF, its effectiveness, impacts and effects, and alternatives. Data from the survey were used to address most of the evaluation issues.

We began the exercise by selecting the sample of project representatives to be surveyed. This was done by reviewing the CIS data set and removing any duplicates. Also, we wanted to limit the number of surveys any single organization had to complete to five so we randomly selected five projects for the few organizations with more than five projects included in the file. This process yielded 479 cases from 393 organizations.

Using the evaluation issues as a guide, the questionnaire was constructed and pre-tested it with seven respondents. Some minor modifications were made in the wake of the pre-tests. The surveys were self-administered.

To enhance response rates, a reminder/thank-you letter was mailed out three weeks after the initial mail-out of the survey. The original closing date for the survey was extended twice because of the low response rate. With the response rate still low, we called every non-respondent and asked them to complete and return the questionnaire.

2.3.4 In-Depth Interviews

The purposes of the interviews were: 1) to gain a better appreciation of how CCIF carried out its activities; 2) to assess qualitatively the extent to which CCIF had achieved its objectives; 3) to learn what could be done to make similar programs more successful; 4) to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of the program and its projects; 5) to grasp the issues that are still outstanding in the child care field today; and 6) to examine what would happen if the federal government withdrew its involvement from child care.

We began by obtaining lists of potential interview subjects from CCIF staff. From an initial list of potential contacts, we and the scientific authority identified 10 staff at CCIF (including one former CCIF consultant), six provincial government representatives, and 10 child care non-government organization (NGO) agents².

Concurrently, we designed interview guides to govern the interviews. Somewhat different guides were needed to reflect the different perspectives of each of the above groups.

Interviews, which lasted from 90 minutes to three hours, were completed with all but three NGO representatives, one of whom refused to participate, and two others whom we could not contact. Interviews were held in person with respondents in the National Capital Region and by phone with those outside these areas.

2.3.5 Case Studies

The aims of the case studies were: to get a grass roots perspective of CCIF as it operated in the community -- local perception of responsiveness to community need, adequacy of finances, and strengths and weaknesses; to gauge uptake -- who actually

²

One was actually a worker at a municipal government.

benefited from the project; and to obtain suggestions for improvements/modifications to a program such as CCIF.

The Terms of Reference for the evaluation stipulated that a number of projects considered by CCIF staff to be worthwhile or successful be selected for in-depth study, with a particular focus on innovative models of service, longer term and more expensive projects. CCIF staff were asked to nominate projects meeting these criteria, with the additional consideration that people knowledgeable about the project were still available. Of the 24 projects nominated by CCIF, 12 were selected with the assistance of the scientific authority to represent a balance of priority areas (e.g., special needs, rural, native, etc.) as well as regional and national projects. A list of the projects selected for study is contained in Appendix B of this report.

The field work activities of all case studies comprised five components: preparation work; a review of project files; interviews with managers, and staff; a review of administrative data; and published literature. In addition, the demonstration projects included a site visit.

2.3.6 Peer Review

The general objective of the peer review was to determine whether the reviewed projects contributed to the objectives of CCIF. There were several purposes: to critique the quality of the projects (i.e., methodological rigor); to assess the relevance of the work -- how much it added to the knowledge base; to assess the usefulness of the work -- potential applications; to determine its impact on the child care field -- how it was perceived and received; and to rate the extent of the project's contribution to the understanding of factors involved in quality child care.

The first step in the process was to select appropriate participants, i.e., acknowledged Canadian experts in the field of child care. The list of experts was compiled by Norpark through discussion with the scientific authority and staff at CCIF.

Then we selected the studies to be reviewed. The project selection process began by identifying the research and demonstration projects from the data base. An important aspect of this process was the involvement of CCIF, which was asked to nominate examples of excellent research and demonstration projects. In addition, we wanted to ensure that there was coverage of topics and geographical regions and tended to select projects with larger budgets.

For the selected projects, we obtained the final reports from CCIF. Experts were sent an outline of the project and a copy of the final report, and asked to read and critique the work for quality, relevance, usefulness, impact on the field, and potential applications. They were given a protocol to help them structure their responses.

2.4 Constraints

An important caveat to bear in mind while reading this report is that most of our informants were heavily involved in child care, and have benefited directly or indirectly from CCIF. Many -- e.g., CCIF staff, representatives of NGOs funded by CCIF, child care researchers who received CCIF funding -- have a vested interest in a continuing federal role in child care. Almost everyone we spoke to rated CCIF very highly in most regards.

Still, many -- including CCIF staff -- pointed out areas of weakness. Given their stake in child care and in CCIF, we took these criticisms seriously. This is not meant to diminish the very positive feedback we received from all quarters on CCIF. Rather, it recognizes that an evaluation is much more valuable if it tells policy makers what needs improving, and why it is important to improve.

There were few other constraints in carrying out this study. One of the only noteworthy ones was tracking down project sponsors for the purposes of the survey. Many organizations that conducted a CCIF project were set up for the sole purpose of running the specific project and consequently disappeared when the funding ended. All we could do was use the information from the CCIF administrative system (address and

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phone) to contact project sponsors. This constraint limited our response rate on the survey to about 40%.

CHAPTER THREE: CCIF PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This chapter sets a context for the evaluation results. It begins with a brief examination of three central issues in the field of child care: availability, affordability and quality of child care. It next turns to a description of the mandate of the CCIF program and briefly identifies its primary activities. Finally, it presents a statistical profile -- an overview of the projects CCIF has funded.

3.1 Environment

A constant in the field of child care has been the prominence of three cardinal issues: availability, affordability and quality. CCIF is intended to improve all three. This section will briefly discuss these issues.

3.1.1 Availability of Child Care in Canada

If one considers the number of licensed child care spaces, and compares that to the need for child care, the supply of licensed spaces falls far short of the need. As shown in Table 3.1 for all of Canada there are only about 131 spaces per 1,000 children in need of care. This varies substantially by region; there are 50 to 60 spaces for every 1,000 children in need in Saskatchewan and Newfoundland; about 130 in Ontario and Quebec, 172 in Manitoba and 237 in Prince Edward Island.

Table 3.2 presents the number of spaces against need by the age of child, and it shows that the supply of licensed spaces does not meet the need particularly for infants and toddlers under 3 years of age, and for older, school-age children.

Table 3.1 Licensed Child Care Spaces and Demand for Child Care by Province

Province	# of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force, 1991	# of regulated child care spaces in 1992	# of regulated spaces per thousand children in need of care
Newfoundland	59,081	3,568	60
P.E.I.	17,404	4,123	237
Nova Scotia	92,614	10,826	117
New Brunswick	70,786	7,162	101
Quebec	620,365	78,388*	126
Ontario	1,094,708	145,545	133
Manitoba	110,537	18,977	172
Saskatchewan	125,556	6,418	51
Alberta	307,387	51,656	168
British Columbia	335,591	40,927	128
N.W.T.	n/a	963	n/a
Yukon	n/a	1,020	n/a
Total	2,834,029	369,573	131

Source: Childcare Resource and Research Unit, 1994.

It is also widely believed that the gap between need and supply is greater for children with special needs -- children with disabilities, children with parents who have irregular school schedules or non-standard work hours, children from rural families, and children from different cultural backgrounds (e.g., aboriginal, minority groups).

Table 3.2 Licensed Child Care Spaces and Demand for Child Care, 1993

Children age group	# of children with parents employed or studying more than 20 hours per week	# of regulated child care spaces	% of children served
0 - 17 months	254,847	31,893	12.5%
18-35 months	238,153	31,694	13.1
3 - 6 years	476,987	205,670	43.1
7- 10 years	880,694	89,838	10.2
11 - 12 years	381,569	3,723	1.0
All children under 7	969,987	269,257	28.0
All children under 13	2,232,250	362,818	16.3

Source: Table 1, Government of Canada, 1994.

Aboriginal child care is becoming a more important issue in part because it is viewed as a means of restoring aboriginal culture and supporting and strengthening aboriginal communities. Currently the supply of child care spaces in aboriginal communities is considerably less than the need for care. There are over 100,000 First Nations children under 12 living on reserve in Canada, but only 2,500 child care and Head Start developmental pre-school spaces available on reserve. These spaces can accommodate approximately 6.2 percent of the children with parents employed or undertaking training, a figure much lower than the national average (28%) for children under 7 who were in regulated child care in 1993 (Childcare Resource and Research Unit, 1994).

A recent study found that many Canadian parents of children under the age of 13 work non-standard hours, and as a result had child care needs that were not being met by licensed child care programs (Lero, Goelman, Pence, Brockman, & Nuttall, 1992). This study found that although approximately 55% of parents with children under 13 years of age worked a standard work week (Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.), approximately one quarter of working parents with primary responsibility for child care worked at least one weekend day, and about 10% worked a fixed, late day or night shift.

In sum, comparison of the supply of licensed child care against "need" shows that the supply falls far short of the need.

3.1.2 Affordability of Child Care in Canada

Affordability is one of the prime aspects of child care that affects its availability. Unlike the health and education systems in Canada, licensed child care relies heavily on user fees to cover costs. User fees for licensed care vary considerably by province and by type of care. For example, the cost to parents of care for infants ranges from about \$300 to \$600 per month in most provinces. In Ontario costs vary by location. In Toronto and Ottawa infant care is about \$1,000 per month, and about \$600 per month in the rest of Ontario.

Affordability affects the type of care parents choose for their children. Table 3.3 presents the rate of use of different types of care by children under six years of age in Canada. From the perspective of affordability of licensed care the most interesting column to examine is the percentage of children using centre-based care. Overall, 17% of children under six were in centre-based care. However, there were interesting variations in the rate of use. First, high-and low-income families were more likely to rely on centre-based care than were middle income families. This finding may have been observed because middle-income families are less likely to be eligible for a subsidy than low-income families, and yet are less likely to be able to afford child care than high-income families. Second, the higher probability that single-parents used licensed care is probably attributable to the greater likelihood of their receiving a subsidy and to their greater need for non-family child care. Finally, the lower rate of use of licensed child care in rural areas is probably attributable to its lower availability and problems of access (e.g., distance to child care centre), although attitude differences towards child care between urban and rural families could also play a role (Fuller, 1985).

Table 3.3
Rate of Child Care Use by Selected Family Characteristics, Children Under Six, 1988 (%)

Family Characteristics	Centre	Non-relative	Relative	Spouse	Other	Total
Income (\$)						
0 - 10,000	22.0	26.6	24.4	11.1*	15.5*	100
10,001 - 20,000	19.5	22.5	25.3	13.6	18.3	100
20,001 - 30,000	14.9	26.8	18.4	22.4	17.3	100
30,001 - 40,000	12.2	31.8	19.5	22.6	13.3	100
40,001 - 50,000	15.1	31.3	20.7	21.5	11.1	100
50,000+	21.1	41.3	14.0	14.5	8.8	100
Urban/Rural						
Urban	18.7	33.0	18.9	19.0	10.1	100
Rural	11.5	32.6	17.7	14.8	22.9	100
Poor/Non-Poor						
Below LICO**	20.5	25.5	19.0	15.6	18.9	100
Above LICO	17.0	35.7	15.9	19.2	11.8	100
Family Type						
One-parent	32.1	36.9	24.7	0.0	5.8*	100
Two-parent	15.5	32.4	17.9	20.3	13.4	100
Canada	17.3	32.9	18.6	18.2	12.6	100

Note: * Estimate is subject to high sampling variability, and should be used with caution.

** Low income cut-offs used by Statistics Canada to measure low incomes in Canada.
 Non-relative care includes care by a nanny as well as regulated and unregulated home child care.

Source: Table 3, Government of Canada, 1994.

3.1.3 Quality of Child Care in Canada

There is concern about the quality of care children receive because of mounting evidence showing that children's development, when they are in child care and for several years afterward, is affected by the quality of care they receive (e.g., Howes, 1988; Howes & Olenick, 1986; Phillips, McCartney, & Sears, 1987; Ruopp, Travers, Glantz & Coelen, 1979). A review by Doherty (1991) reported that programs with high ratings of quality are associated with children who have: greater social competency; higher levels of language development; higher developmental levels of play; better ability to self-regulate; greater compliance; and fewer behavioural problems.

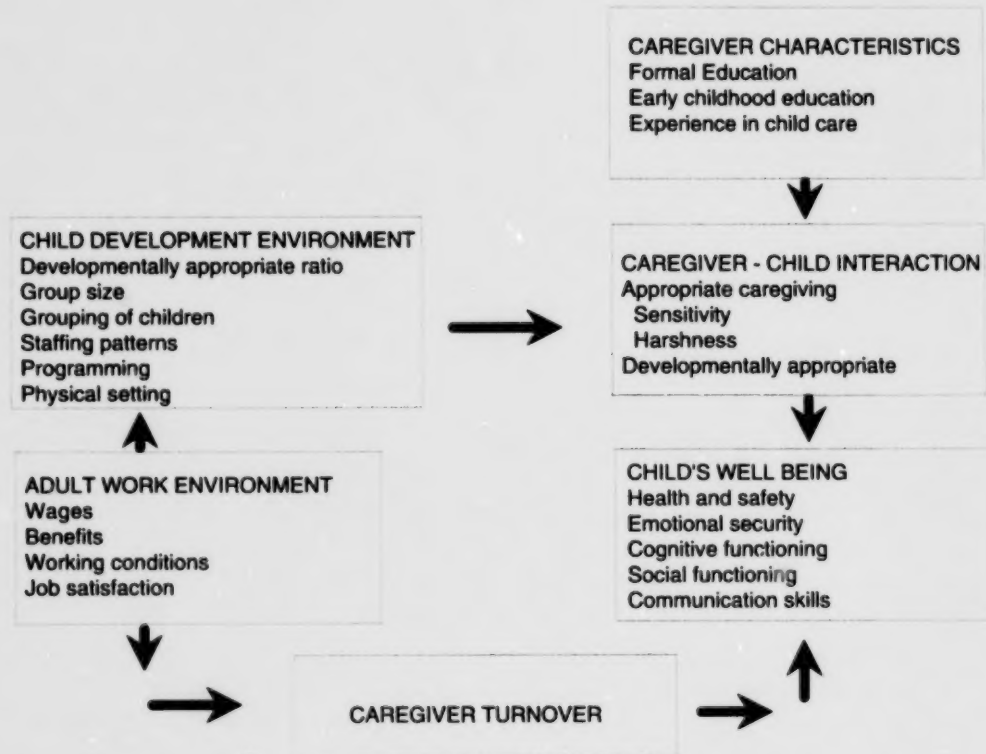
Determinants of Quality

A significant amount of work in the area of child care has gone into identifying variables that affect the quality of care provided by a child care centre. Figure 1, adapted from Whitebook, Howes, and Phillips (1990) and Doherty (1991), summarizes factors believed to affect child care that have been empirically identified. In the material that follows we shall briefly describe these factors, but will not cite the studies; a reasonably current review is available from Doherty (1991).

Research has found that both auspice (type of child care operator) and the presence of regulation play an important role in the quality of child care provided. For instance, licensed, non-profit programs have generally been found to provide a higher level of care than unlicensed, for profit programs.

Turning now to Figure 1, of the several factors that affect child care quality, the characteristics and behaviour of the caregiver are perhaps most critical. In terms of education, what seems to be important is the amount of formal education of the caregiver and whether the training included courses in developmental psychology/early childhood education. Experience in early childhood education by itself does not appear to be important unless that experience has been directed or supported by people knowledgeable about child care. Taken together, these factors appear to influence the interaction between caregivers and children.

Figure 1: Determinants of High Quality Child Care



Evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund

More highly qualified caregivers tend to behave with greater sensitivity, less harshness, and with greater regard for the developmental level of the child.

The general environment of the child care centre is another powerful influence on the quality of care. The physical setting should be safe, and the toys and other aspects of the environment should be developmentally appropriate for the age of the child. Consideration should also be given to the staffing of the centre. The ratio of children to staff should be fairly low, varying somewhat by age of child, and children should probably be grouped by age.

Finally, the role of the caregiver's work environment in determining quality of care is receiving more attention. Caregivers, who work for lower wages and benefits, or in poor working conditions, are more inclined to leave their jobs, thereby reducing quality of care.

3.2 Child Care Initiatives Fund - Program Mandate

A component of the 1987 National Strategy on Child Care, the Child Care Initiatives Fund was established in 1988 for a seven year period ending on March 31, 1995. CCIF was conceived "to encourage and evaluate innovation and to enhance the development of approaches and services as they relate to child day care issues across Canada" (Health and Welfare Canada, 1991). Originally CCIF was allocated \$98 million, but this was subsequently reduced by \$12 million.

CCIF designated priority areas related to the child care needs of families in unusual circumstances or in under-served areas. Priority areas were: aboriginal children; special needs children; children of parents who work shifts or part-time; minority children; rural children; children requiring short-term or emergency care; school-age children; infants; and those requiring employer-supported care.

Those eligible to apply for funding were: community groups; professional associations; unions; non-profit organizations; voluntary organizations; educational institutions;

provincial, territorial, municipal agencies; Indian bands, tribal councils; and aboriginal associations.

There were seven major types of project activities: models of service, needs assessments, conferences, formal training/professional development (workshops), parent/public education, research, and resource materials. CCIF did not fund ongoing operational costs for the delivery of child care services.

As set out in the CCIF logic model (page 21), presented in HRDC's Terms of Reference for the evaluation, the four primary activities of CCIF -- applied research, demonstration projects, development projects, and enhanced information services -- were postulated to result respectively in the following impacts: an expanded knowledge base, a broader stock of child care service models, increased cooperation and coordination among partners involved in child care, and heightened public awareness. We would add to this list, better trained child care personnel. These effects were, in turn, hypothesized to result in the achievement of the central objective of CCIF, namely to improve the quality of child care in Canada so that child care services would become more responsive to families in need.

3.3 CCIF Statistical Profile

The following statistical analysis will provide the reader with a basic appreciation of CCIF activities. It begins with a brief look at the number of projects by fiscal year, organization, province, and organization type. Then key aspects of the projects -- project type, priority areas, and project activity -- are summarized. Finally project funding is examined.

3.3.1 Fiscal Year

Evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund

As of November, 1994³, CCIF had funded 515 child care projects. There seems to be no trend by fiscal year, although the number of projects diminished as the scheduled date of termination (March, 1995) approached:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Number of New Projects (%)</u>
1988-89	54 (10.5%)
1889-90	177 (34.4%)
1990-91	44 (8.5%) ⁴
1991-92	106 (20.6%)
1992-93	84 (16.3%)
1993-94	26 (5.0%)
1994-95 (to date)	24 (4.7%)
TOTAL	515

3.3.2 Organizations Funded

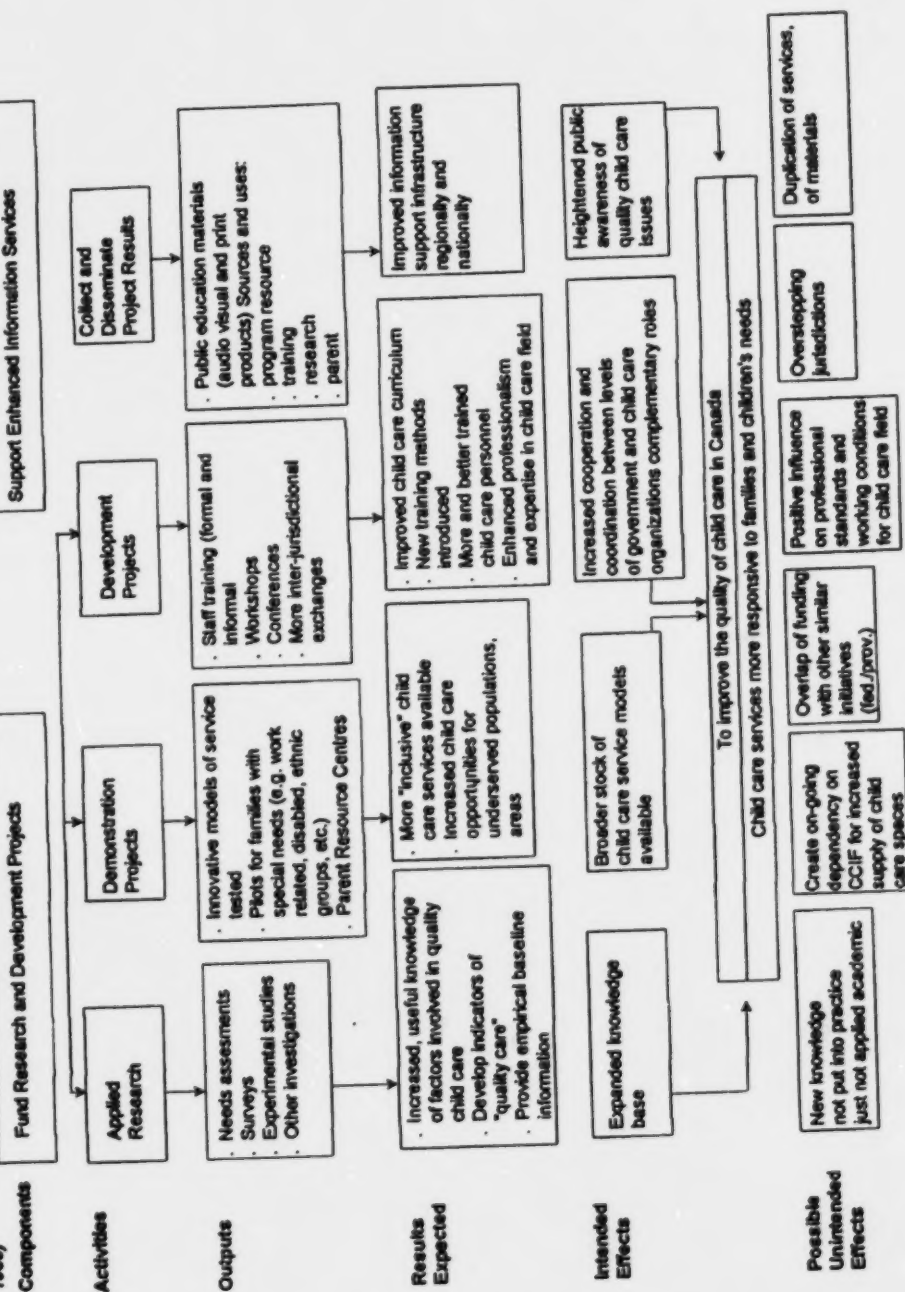
A total of 401 organizations received funding for CCIF projects. About 84% of them had one project; however, one organization (Canadian Child Care Federation) was involved with 12 projects. The entire distribution follows:

<u>Number of Projects</u>	<u>Number of Organizations (%)</u>
1	335 (83.5%)
2	44 (10.9%)
3	11 (2.7%)
4	6 (1.5%)
5	2 (0.5%)
6	1 (0.2%)
7	1 (0.2%)
12	1 (0.2%)
TOTAL	401

³ In total, CCIF funded 519 projects (for \$77.5 million) as of when the program expired in March, 1995. Since there were only 4 additional projects between December 1994 (when the data were originally analyzed) and March, 1995, it was felt that nothing would change by updating the analysis.

⁴ The number of new projects funded in 1990-91 was low because projects carrying over from previous years took up much of the available funding. In 1991-92 the number of new projects jumps again since there were few projects carried over from 1990-91 or prior.

CCIF Logic Model
Objective: To monitor, promote, encourage quality childcare in Canada by funding innovative research and development projects" (T.B. Terms and Conditions, 1989)



3.3.3 Province

Table 3.4 shows the distribution of CCIF projects by province⁵. Distribution by province generally reflects population size, except in Quebec where "It took longer for CCIF to establish a balance between CCIF and provincial priorities"⁶. About one-fifth of the projects were aimed at aboriginals.

Table 3.4 Number of CCIF Projects by Province

Jurisdiction	Number of Projects	Percent of Total
Province/Territory	319	61.9%
Newfoundland	13	2.5%
P.E.I.	12	2.3
Nova Scotia	21	4.1
New Brunswick	16	3.1
Quebec	41	8.0
Ontario	97	18.8
Manitoba	20	3.9
Saskatchewan	18	3.5
Alberta	23	4.5
British Columbia	53	10.3
Northwest Territories	2	0.4
Yukon	3	0.6
National	66	12.8
Partnerships	25	4.9
Native Projects	105	20.4
National	12	2.3
On-Reserve	64	12.4
Off-Reserve	29	5.6

⁵ The table also includes national projects (not restricted to one province), funding to other programs, and Native projects. This is the way CCIF presented its data, so we followed suit.

⁶ Child Care Initiative Fund Profile of Funding. CCIF, Sept. 1994, p.4.

Canada	515	100.0%
--------	-----	--------

3.3.4 Organization Type

The bulk of contributions went to associations/societies (22%) or educational institutions (15%). Aboriginal bands, aboriginal associations and Tribal councils ran 16% of the projects. Very few of the contributions went to unions or employers. Municipal and provincial agencies together accounted for only 6% of the projects. Community groups also got 6% of the projects (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Organization Type

Organization Type	Number	Percent
Educational institution	76	14.8%
Provincial government	18	3.5
Municipal government	14	2.7
Employee's association	4	0.8
Child care service provider	49	9.5
Association/society	112	21.7
Community group	30	5.8
Native association	33	6.4
National association	48	9.3
Employer	1	0.2
Indian band	44	8.5
Provincial association	28	5.4
Information/resource centre	2	0.4
Tribal council	7	1.4
Union	1	0.2
Hospital/medical association	23	4.5
Interest group	13	2.5
Funding to other programs	12	2.3
Total	515	100.0%

According to (incomplete) data from the computer system, these projects were cost-shared with the provinces and granted to 12 organizations to work on family violence projects in 1992.

Source: CIS November 1994

3.3.5 Project Type

A large majority of projects (72%) were development projects intended to create educational materials, or provide staff training/professional development. Demonstration projects -- addressing innovative approaches to child care provision, or adapting child care programs and services to meet community needs -- accounted for most of the rest. Only 5% of projects were classified as research, surprising given that the 1988 objective of CCIF was "to monitor, promote, (and) encourage quality child care in Canada by funding innovative research and development projects" (Terms of Reference, HRDC, p.7).

Table 3.6 Project Type

Project Type	Number	Percent
Demonstration	92	17.9%
Development	371	72.0
Research	26	5.0
Interest group funding	13	2.5
Partnerships with other funders	13	2.5
Total	515	100.0%

Source: CIS November 1994

3.3.6 Priority Areas Addressed by Projects

CCIF is mandated to address specified "priority areas" with its funding. As is evident from Table 3.7, priority areas are a combination of target groups, type of child care, and activities (e.g., research projects, conferences). Projects could have up to three priority areas: 60% focused on two priorities, and 18% focused on three. Projects with more

than one priority tended to list a target group first and type of care second. Professional development was a priority of about a third of the projects. Nearly one in five projects had a parent/public education focus. Aboriginals were the priority for about 20% of the projects.

Table 3.7 Priority Areas Addressed (% Distribution)

Priority Area	First Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority
Special needs	8.7%	0.8%	0.0%
Work related	6.0	0.6	0.2
Rural	7.4	0.8	0.2
Emergency/part-time/shift work	3.5	0.4	0.0
Professional development	20.8	10.5	1.9
School-aged	5.0	3.1	0.4
Minority	1.9	0.4	0.0
Infant care	0.6	0.8	0.2
Parent/public education	10.5	4.7	3.3
Inuit	0.0	1.7	0.0
Resource centre	0.0	6.0	2.9
Family home daycare	0.0	5.6	1.4
Health/nutrition/safety	0.2	3.7	0.8
Conferences	5.4	3.3	0.8
Francophone outside Quebec	0.0	2.1	2.1
Hub model	0.0	1.7	0.4
Needs assessment	0.0	9.9	1.7
Partnerships with other programs	4.9	0.0	0.0
Research	4.7	2.1	0.0
Native off-reserve	5.6	0.8	0.8
Native national	2.3	0.0	0.0
Native on-reserve	12.4	0.8	0.2
None	--	40.2	82.5
Number of Cases	515	515	515

Source: CIS November 1994

3.3.7 Project Activity

As shown in Table 3.8, the most prevalent activity undertaken by CCIF projects was exploring models of service (28%). Almost equal proportions of projects were categorized as needs assessments (17%), creating resource materials (16%), networking (15%), or training (15%). Child care research was coded as the activity for 7% of the projects.

Table 3.8 Project Activity

Activity	Number	Percent
Models of service	112	21.7%
Resource materials	80	15.5
Training	76	14.8
Networking	78	15.1
Needs assessments	86	16.7
Child care research	37	7.2
Work related	20	3.9
Intervenor	13	2.5
Partnerships	13	2.5
Total	515	100.0%

Source: CIS November 1994

3.3.8 Project Funding

This section examines how CCIF funding (as measured by approved budget allocation⁷) varies as a function of project type, priority area, target group, activity, and organization type.

⁷ This is what CCIF uses in their reports. Allocated budget very closely matches actual expenditure.

Evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund

Average (mean) CCIF funding across all projects was \$150,360. Project funding ranged from \$1,000 to \$1.2 million. By category:

Funding Category	Number of Projects (%)
Under \$10,000	36 (7.0%)
\$10,000-\$24,999	72 (14.0%)
\$25,000-\$49,999	89 (17.3%)
\$50,000-\$74,999	57 (11.1%)
\$75,000-\$99,999	53 (10.3%)
\$100,000-\$199,999	86 (16.7%)
\$200,000-\$499,999	90 (17.5%)
\$500,000-\$999,999	27 (5.2%)
\$1,000,000 +	5 (1.0%)
TOTAL	515

Source: CIS November 1994

Funding by Project Type

Research accounted for only 9% of CCIF expenditures. Three in every five dollars were expended on development projects; another 30% was spent on demonstration projects.

Table 3.9 CCIF Funding by Project Type

Project Type	Number of Projects	CCIF Funding	
		Total	Distribution
Demonstration	92	\$22,780,756	29.4%
Development	371	\$46,712,030	60.3
Research	26	\$ 7,166,857	9.3
Interest group funding	13	\$ 336,430	0.4
Partnerships	13	\$ 439,532	0.6

Source: CIS November 1994

Funding by Priority Area

Because projects may have multiple priorities, there is no flawless way of allocating expenditures by priority. Table 3.10 allocates dollars equally among the priorities for a

project. Thus, if a project had two priorities half the dollars were allocated to each; if there were three priorities, a third of the money was allocated to each. The result is listed in the final column (actual dollars are excluded because the arbitrary allocation would confer false precision). Work related projects received 5% of the funding; native projects received about 15%; special need projects 8%; and resource centres 5%.

Funding by Organization Type

Table 3.11 shows the number of projects and distribution of CCIF funding by class of recipients. The greatest amount of funding (21%) went to educational institutions, followed by associations/societies (20%), and national associations (13%). Aboriginal organizations received 18% of the money. Community groups got 5% of the money, provincial agencies 2%, municipal agencies 2%, and child care providers 8%.

Table 3.10 Priority Areas Addressed (% Distribution)

Priority Area	Proportion of Projects			Distribution of Funding
	First Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority	
Special needs	8.7%	0.8%	0.0%	7.8%
Work related	6.0	0.6	0.2	2.6
Rural	7.4	0.8	0.2	3.2
Emergency/part-time/shift work	3.5	0.4	0.0	2.4
Professional development	20.8	10.5	1.9	21.9
School-aged	5.0	3.1	0.4	4.1
Minority	1.9	0.4	0.0	1.9
Infant care	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.8
Parent/public education	10.5	4.7	3.3	13.2
Inuit	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.8
Resource centre	0.0	6.0	2.9	5.4
Family home daycare	0.0	5.6	1.4	3.0
Health/nutrition/safety	0.2	3.7	0.8	3.0
Conferences	5.4	3.3	0.8	1.5
Francophone outside Quebec	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.1
Hub model	0.0	1.7	0.4	1.7
Needs assessment	0.0	9.9	1.7	1.7
Partnerships with other programs	4.9	0.0	0.0	1.0
Research	4.7	2.1	0.0	8.2
Native off-reserve	5.6	0.8	0.8	4.1
Native national	2.3	0.0	0.0	1.5
Native on-reserve	12.4	0.8	0.2	9.0
Other	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0
None	--	40.2	82.3	--
Number of Cases	515	515	515	100.0%

Source: CIS November 1994

Table 3.11 CCIF Funding by Organization Type

Organization Type	Number of Projects	CCIF Funding	
		Total	Distribution
Educational institution	76	\$16,302,378	21.1%
Provincial government	18	\$ 1,486,540	1.9
Municipal government	14	\$ 1,307,387	1.7
Employee's association	4	\$ 201,991	0.3
Child care service provider	49	\$ 6,003,818	7.8
Association/society	112	\$15,238,895	19.7
Community group	30	\$ 3,862,515	5.0
Native association	33	\$ 5,155,856	6.7
National association	48	\$10,175,727	13.1
Employer	1	\$ 25,825	0.0
Indian band	44	\$ 6,981,254	9.0
Provincial association	28	\$ 3,354,782	4.3
Information/resource centre	2	\$ 522,892	0.7
Tribal council	7	\$ 1,559,087	2.0
Union	1	\$ 98,665	0.1
Hospital/medical association	23	\$ 4,428,633	5.7
Interest group	13	\$ 336,430	0.4
Funding to other programs	12	\$ 392,930	0.5

Source: CIS November 1994

Funding by Target Group

Over half the projects targeted no specific group (Table 3.12). Of those with a target group, most were aimed at natives. There were also a significant number of special needs and school-age projects. Most projects (86%) reported that they served no one directly (this would be the case for most research and development projects). Of those projects that served people directly (mostly demonstration projects), native projects served an average of 1,843 people, non-native projects 965 (Source: Project self-evaluations).

Table 3.12 Target Group

Target Group	Number of Projects	Percent
No specific target group	286	55.5%
Special needs	48	9.3
School-age	39	7.6
Minority	12	2.3
Infant	7	1.4
Inuit	4	0.8
Francophone outside Quebec	16	3.1
Native off-reserve	27	5.2
Native national	12	2.3
Native on-reserve	64	12.4
Total	515	100.0%

Source: CIS November 1994

Funding by Activity

Due to quirks in coding on CIS, "activities" are included under various variables. Thus conferences are considered a "priority area," staff training is an "activity," and professional development is a "priority area." In any event, conferences were denominated a priority area of 9.5% of projects, receiving 1.5% of the funding. Training was the primary activity of 14.8% of projects, receiving 19.7% of funding. In total, 72% of CCIF projects were classified as development, accounting for 60.3% of funding.

3.3.9 Aboriginal Projects

This section briefly reviews the number and distribution of aboriginal projects by fiscal year, province, project type, activity, and funding category.

Fiscal Year

As of November 1994, CCIF had funded 105 projects sponsored by natives. As with other CCIF projects, there seems to be no trend by fiscal year, although the number of projects diminished as the end of the program approached:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Number of New Projects</u>	
1988-89	10	(9.5%)
1989-90	34	(32.4%)
1990-91	16	(15.2%)
1991-92	23	(21.9%)
1992-93	12	(11.4%)
1993-94	8	(7.6%)
1994-95 (to date)	2	(1.9%)
TOTAL	105	

Province

Most aboriginal projects went to sponsors in Ontario (31%)⁸ or on the Prairies (31%). There were very few in the Atlantic provinces. This distribution generally reflects the population of aboriginals in the various provinces.

Project Type

Nearly three-quarters of the native projects were development projects; another 24% were demonstration projects. Only 2% were research projects. Compared to non-native projects, research is under-represented, and demonstration projects are over-represented

⁸ Of the 33 projects in Ontario, 11 were national projects. One other national project was centered in the Northwest Territories.

Table 3.13 Number of Native Projects by Province

Jurisdiction	Number of Projects	Percent of Total
Newfoundland	1	1.0%
P.E.I.	1	1.0
Nova Scotia	4	3.8
New Brunswick	3	2.9
Quebec	12	11.4
Ontario	33	31.4
Manitoba	14	13.3
Saskatchewan	12	11.4
Alberta	7	6.7
British Columbia	14	13.3
Northwest Territories	2	1.9
Yukon	2	1.9

Table 3.14 Native Project Type

Project Type	Number	Percent
Demonstration	25	23.8%
Development	78	74.3
Research	2	1.9

Source: CIS November 1994

Project Activity

The most salient finding from Table 3.15 is that 43% of native projects were needs assessments -- a much higher proportion than for non-native projects (10%). This may be because of an absence of "basic" information about child care needs in those communities. All other activities accounted for a smaller proportion of native than non-native projects.

Table 3.15 Native Project Activity

Activity	Number	Percent
Models of service	24	22.9%
Resource materials	11	10.5
Training	12	11.4
Networking	12	11.4
Needs assessments	45	42.9
Child care research	1	1.0

Source: CIS November 1994

Project Funding

Total funding for CCIF aboriginal projects was \$16.7 million, for an average of \$158,756 per project. Native on-reserve projects (national and non-national) received about \$10.65 million in funding, almost twice the \$6.0 million received by off-reserve projects.

By category:

<u>Funding Category</u>	<u>Number of Projects (%)</u>	
Under \$10,000	6	(5.7%)
\$10,000 - \$24,999	19	(18.1%)
\$25,000 - \$49,999	16	(15.2%)
\$50,000 - \$74,999	11	(10.5%)
\$75,000 - \$99,999	11	(10.5%)
\$100,000 - \$199,999	15	(14.3%)
\$200,000 - \$499,999	19	(18.1%)
\$500,000 - \$999,999	6	(5.7%)
\$1,000,000 +	2	(1.9%)
TOTAL	105	

Source: CIS, November 1994

3.4 Summary

This chapter has laid the foundation for the findings to follow in Part 2 of this report. Most importantly, we learned that availability/accessibility, affordability, and quality are the three predominant issues in the field of child care; CCIF funded development, demonstration, and research projects to address these and other pressing issues; and CCIF funded 515 projects (to November, 1994), with average project funding of \$150,360. In general, the statistical review suggests that actual activity conformed with intended activity, except that research projects accounted for a very small proportion of funded activities.

PART 2

Evaluation Results

CHAPTER FOUR: PROGRAM RELEVANCE

This chapter considers the continuing relevance of a federal role in the child care arena. Using evidence from interviews, the peer review panel, the case studies and the survey, it begins by assessing whether there is a demonstrated need for the federal government to be involved in child care. Then it turns to a discussion of CCIF's linkages to broader government strategies.

4.1 Need for a Continued Federal Role in Child Care

This section examines this issue by: a) reporting on the opinions of interviewees and experts; b) determining whether the conditions that gave rise to CCIF continue to exist; c) assessing whether CCIF duplicates activities of the provincial governments or other organizations; and d) examining what our respondents reported would occur if the federal government withdrew its research and development support from child care.

4.1.1 *Opinions on Continuing Federal Role*

There were two schools of thought within CCIF on this issue. One group was resolute that there continues to be a need for a program such as CCIF. The primary reason, as expressed by several CCIF officials, was that there is still much to do and that if the federal government did not do it, the provinces certainly wouldn't. "The provinces don't have money to initiate national research or training which federal money can address." This group believed there is a need for a national fund to ensure comparability and transportability across regions (by sharing information) and to lead basic applied research into child care as a social support to the economy. NGO representatives were in complete agreement with this viewpoint.

The second group within CCIF (the smaller of the two), felt that there was no need to continue CCIF, but that there was a need for a different program to build upon the accomplishments of CCIF. "CCIF has laid a foundation and now there is a need for something to move what CCIF has done forward. There is nothing like CCIF around but it is not necessary to continue CCIF."

All provincial government and NGO officials interviewed concurred that there is a continuing role for the federal government to play in child care, though not necessarily what CCIF was doing. Provincial representatives were non-committal on the need for a program like CCIF. They agreed that CCIF had made a valuable contribution to the field, but no provincial representative seemed to think there was a need to continue CCIF as it existed. Some thought key activities -- especially research studies and national projects (e.g., information sharing) -- were still needed. NGOs urged a continuing role chiefly to ensure adequate funding for initiatives in the area such as exploring innovative approaches to child care, or providing universal child care. Other specific areas for federal involvement mentioned by both groups were research, setting national standards (Alberta disagreed on this, though), distributing information, facilitating networking between provinces/child care organizations, helping advocacy, and ensuring portability of training.

Many CCIF staff identified research and evaluation as the areas most in need of attention. "Under CCIF not much quality research was done. There is a need to generate such research because one can't depend on universities and SSHRC to do it but need to lever communities to do it."

There was some disagreement among NGOs as to the exact nature of the required program. Some seemed content with the CCIF model: a central body overseeing a broader approach that facilitates the development of an infrastructure, promotes innovation, and ensures funding for research. Others called for changes, one saying it needs to be much more cost effective, another that a better mechanism for choosing projects was needed since CCIF "did not make the difference it could have."

All six peer reviewers thought that the federal government should continue to fund demonstration and research projects. A common justification for this view was that the field of child care is a new, evolving social service about which little is known. Hence it is necessary to conduct research and systematically evaluate programs already in existence. As one reviewer put it, "we are building a system that has not existed before (which must meet) family needs that are substantially different from a generation ago, (and which must) respond to social and economic change which has been rapid." One reviewer stated that the federal government should fund these activities because there is a danger of duplicating research if only provincial governments are involved. Another reviewer pointed out that a number of projects carried out by CCIF were national in scope not only in the data that were collected, but also because they addressed issues on national goals and strategies.

All but one of the reviewers thought that child care research had helped make child care services more responsive to the needs of families and children. Several of the reviewers qualified their answers by emphasizing that knowledge generated from research is often not acted upon. Researchers identified the following as examples of studies that have made child care services more responsive: the Canadian National Child Care Study; the study on wages and working conditions; and studies that have identified factors associated with high quality child care.

There was a consensus among case study project representatives that the federal government has an important role to play in addressing key child care issues. For the most part, that role was one of providing funding. Other suggested roles included provision of information, and advice. They also suggested that a strong effort should be made to identify effective elements of child care programs in Canada.

4.1.2 Does the Original Impetus Still Hold?

Another way to get at the issue of whether there should continue to be a federal role in the area of child care research and development is to determine if the needs that originally justified the program still obtain. Virtually all CCIF staff said that the key

outstanding issues in child care continue to be quality, accessibility and affordability. Government funding was said to be the key to all these issues. The link of funding with affordability is clear: more public funding makes child care services more affordable for parents. More funding can also foster superior quality (defined by child/staff ratios, qualifications of workers, working conditions and salaries, turnover of staff), because it enables agencies to provide care with lower child/staff ratios and/or to pay more to workers so they can attract and keep more qualified staff. Finally more funding may create more subsidized child care spaces, thereby increasing availability (defined as the services being available if parents need them).

There was also a consensus among CCIF staff that research is needed to support policy makers and service providers in child care. Related to this, there is a shortage of Canadian resource material, with most groups relying on American material.

There was a consensus among all interviewees that only a small percentage of the demand for *licensed* child care is being met in every region across Canada. Ironically, as several hastened to add, there are a lot of vacancies in child care centres across Canada. Informants speculated that it might be a problem of affordability -- "available but not accessible" as one person put it. When unregulated care is included there are sufficient child care opportunities provided, "but not all child care is of high quality and much of the quality care is too expensive for parents."

All interviewees specified certain types of services for which demand exceeds supply. They said that there is a general lack of service but there are real supply-demand discrepancies in the areas of infant care (which is expensive), rural care, on-reserve care, care for children with special needs, flexible care (that is, care during non-standard hours and emergency care), teen parent programs, school-age care, and licensed family day care. Mentioned in virtually every province were flexible care and infant care.

Some interviewees provided numerical estimates for the degree to which demand exceeds supply. About 50% of the demand for pre-school care is now being met. Only 2% of the need for rural care and less than 5% of that for flexible hours is being met.

The regular system (9 to 5 care) is not meeting 10-13% of demand. (These estimates are lower than the Statistics Canada figures presented in Chapter 3.)

Nearly every CCIF consultant identified flexible child care as the type of demand that is most likely to increase. The need for flexible hours will probably grow since the service sector is growing and this sector requires irregular hours. The findings from the Statistics Canada study (Lero et al, 1992) are consistent with this conclusion.

None of the three groups of interviewees was very optimistic that the increased demand would be met. They believed that public funding is the key to meeting demand and that deficit problems at the federal and provincial levels make it unlikely that additional funding is forthcoming. One exception may be in the area of on-reserve care. If everything goes according to the recently announced plan, there will be an additional 6,000 spaces created over 3 years. "This will not meet all the needs but it is a good beginning."

Most interviewees thought there were no types of service for which demand will decline. Some forecast a decline in the demand for full-time standard hours of care, however. Two provincial representatives thought that school-age care could decline, especially if the school system expands (e.g., junior kindergarten). And one CCIF informant thought the demand for some types of rural care may decline (e.g., mining, fisheries areas).

4.1.3 If the Federal Role Ended

Not surprisingly, all CCIF staff stated that a federal withdrawal from child care would be "devastating," as several put it. For the most part they seemed to be answering in terms of CCIF activities. Some, however, considered the entire federal child care effort in making their response. "Federal funding through CAP has been the engine driving the development of child care in Canada."

All provincial representatives and case study project representatives were also convinced that a federal withdrawal would be negative. Reactions ranged from

"Devastating," (two said this) to "Child care advocates would be disappointed." Most NGO representatives also foretold of desolation if the federal government withdrew. "It would destroy (child care). . . The field would go back to being isolated and fragmented."

Among the repercussions listed by the interviewees:

- A federal withdrawal from child care would signal to the rest of the country that child care is no longer a priority on the federal agenda. Any hope for national standards would be dashed.
- Eventually this signal would be mimicked by the provincial and perhaps municipal governments. Some provinces would remain committed to strong child care services, but others would lose or lack the ability to effectively deal with quality child care.
- At the local level it would be very difficult to maintain any kind of momentum for the issue without interest from higher levels of government.
- Professional associations would be unable to carry on, deterring the cross-fertilization of ideas.
- Current systems and networks would fall apart. Provincial governments would not be willing to take over the activities; the infrastructure would be lost.
- Research would be limited or might cease altogether.
- It would probably mark the end of funding for demonstration/experimental projects, which, in turn, would cause a certain level of stagnation in child care with regard to exploring new models of service.
- Information sharing would diminish substantially.
- There would be no funding for on-reserve child care and therefore no services. The majority of provincial governments would not do it so that children would continue in informal care of unknown quality.

In consequence, say interviewees, the quality and accessibility of child care would suffer.

The vast majority of survey respondents averred that federal government withdrawal from child care research and development would be very negative or somewhat negative for all the activities tabulated below. They believed the effect would be especially deleterious in the areas of research into child care issues and development of quality standards for child care. Asked whether the federal government should continue to be involved in child care issues, an overwhelming majority, 98%, said yes.

Table 4.1
Effect of Federal Withdrawal from Various Research and Development Activities

Activity	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	No Effect	Somewhat Positive	Very Positive	Don't Know
Research into child care issues	78.2%	19.7%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4%	4.9%
Development of child care programs	65.9	28.9	3.0	0.0	2.2	9.4
Development of quality standards for child care	77.5	15.2	5.1	0.0	2.2	9.8
Development of resources and learning materials	73.0	20.6	4.3	0.0	2.1	7.2
Networking and information sharing	60.9	31.9	4.3	0.7	2.2	8.6

Source: CCIF Survey of Project Sponsors

N=153

All this certainly implies that federal involvement has been crucial in placing child care on the national agenda and in building a child care infrastructure in Canada. But it also raises questions about the stability of the infrastructure if it would collapse soon after CCIF terminated.

4.1.4 Alternative Sources of Funding

CCIF staff held that no service provided by CCIF could be obtained from another federal source. "The federal government has no other program with child care as the primary focus." Provincial governments or the private sector could have funded anything that CCIF did. Very seldom did they, however. "The provincial governments have no money and fund raising doesn't raise enough money."

Moreover, some CCIF staff said none of the *projects* could have proceeded without CCIF -- "No funding was available." Others were basically in agreement, but qualified the statement by type of project. Two CCIF consultants opined that neither needs

assessments nor demonstration projects could have proceeded without CCIF. Another thought that major research projects could not have proceeded without CCIF although bits of research could have been done. Some development projects could have found other funding but "the majority of projects were small and so local that no one else would have funded them."

Nine in ten survey respondents held that their project could not have been undertaken without funding from CCIF. They gave various reasons why the project could not have proceeded, most connected to a lack of funding:

<u>Reason Why Project Could not Proceed</u>	<u>% of Projects</u>
No other funding source	64.4%
Not enough funding from other sources	10.1
Lack of human resources	15.4
Project not of interest to other source	7.4
Other*	2.7
	N=127

* E.g., could not charge adequate fees, size of project

All but two case study project representatives said that if CCIF had not funded the project it could not have gone ahead. These two said the project may have gone ahead, but that its quality and effect would have been substantially curtailed. Seldom did the case study project sponsors look for other avenues of funding. This was most often because the project sponsors knew of no other source. Several said they "knew" their province had no money for their proposed project. Others had worked on a previous project sponsored by CCIF, often a needs assessment for the current project, and thought it was the obvious source of funding.

Two of the 12 case study projects obtained small grants from service organizations or foundations. In two cases, the province also provided a subsidy for parents' fees. One aboriginal project received funding from HRDC for the training component (under the Pathways program); the band provided the capital costs.

Evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund

According to the provinces and NGOs, the most significant service that the CCIF provided that could not be picked up by another existing service was the provision of dollars to fund innovative projects in child care. There are also no other groups (federal or provincial) that provide funding for projects that focus on the child care needs of a specific clientele, particularly aboriginals. The poorer provinces said that without CCIF, there would have been no funding available in the province for research, training advances, or conferences.

Most of those interviewed maintained that none of the CCIF activities were counterproductive. Two CCIF staff did say that needs assessments, demonstration projects and feasibility studies may have been counterproductive because they created a demand that could not be met since CCIF could not provide on-going funding. Another person mentioned that CCIF funding in some cases led to dependency on the program. Because there was no alternative for funding, many groups came back to CCIF again and again.

There were a couple of areas where provincial representatives felt the activities of the CCIF were, if not counterproductive, perhaps of limited value. One suggested that too many demonstration projects were started with no thought given to how they would be supported when CCIF funding ran out. There were also other projects which were started that had no long term vision or planning as to how they might assist the advancement of child care in the province. Also, two NGOs mentioned that the lack of continuous funding was counterproductive since without CCIF funding many projects could not continue.

4.2 Linkages to Broader Government Strategies

According to CCIF staff, there were no official or premeditated linkages with other federal child care strategies. Linkages that did exist between CCIF and other programs tended to be informal, consisting mainly of information sharing and referral. When a project did not meet the mandate of CCIF it might be referred to other programs. The

consultants would put groups in touch with other programs; some received funding through Indian Affairs, Secretary of State, etc.

The federal program that came closest to the CCIF mandate was the Community Action Plan for Children (CAPC) of which Brighter Futures is a component. "That program was careful that funding would not go to child care but would be flexible enough to complement CCIF." CAPC funds took over where CCIF funds left off; for example CCIF helped the creation of a day care in a high school, the funding of which was taken over by CAPC when CCIF funding ended. (CAPC is concerned with children at risk and as such child care is a peripheral concern of the program.) We were told that there were no communication ties between CCIF and CAPC. "Health promotion (which administers the CAPC) would contact CCIF but there was no good linkage between the programs." Once Brighter Futures was announced, CCIF got out of some activities that had a health focus.

Although most CCIF staff believed there was little or no duplication of CCIF activities with those of other federal programs, "this was accidental." That is, linkages were poor, so there was little checking with other programs. But then, no other program had a mandate close to that of CCIF. Other departments supported child care in an indirect way but there was no mechanism to coordinate activities. The Secretary of State funded projects at the regional level but any coordination was by accident. There may have been some overlap with National Welfare grants, Child Mental Health, National Literacy Secretariat, and the Disabled Persons Secretariat which all had a research mandate although the National Welfare grants got out of funding child care research.

4.3 Conclusion

The evidence argues for a demonstrated need for continued federal intervention in child care. The original impetus for the program -- a need for more quality child care -- remains in force; informants asserted that there is a lot left to accomplish in the area. No other program -- federal, provincial or municipal -- duplicates the activities of CCIF, so it is easy to conclude that if the federal government ceases CCIF activities, no other

program could fill the gap. The provinces could fund anything that CCIF did but seldom do so⁹. Finally, most informants were adamant that a federal withdrawal would be "devastating." The infrastructure built could crumble.

⁹ Some provinces have funded research and development in child care. For instance, Ontario tested flexible models briefly. But examples are few.

CHAPTER FIVE: PROJECT OUTCOMES

This chapter explores project outcomes: the extent to which they achieved their goals, end products developed, application of results beyond the original project, lessons learned, and survival rate of projects after CCIF funding ended.

5.1 Achievement of Project Goals

Results of project self-evaluations and of the survey speak to the issue of goal achievement. Some 99% of those returning project self-evaluations said that most of the project objectives and expected outcomes had been met.

Table 5.1 shows the extent to which survey respondents believed their project achieved its goals. Two aspects of the table stand out. First, the majority of project representatives felt they totally achieved most of their goals. For every goal, at least 80% said it was totally or partially achieved. Never did a substantial proportion of respondents (maximum of 3%) say that a goal was not at all achieved.

The other interesting aspect of the results is that most of the goals listed in the table applied to most of the projects. Only three goals -- improve working conditions of child care providers, increase the general availability of care, and increase child care opportunities -- were cited as not applicable by a majority of respondents. These results differed in predictable ways by main activity of the project. For example, few research projects aimed to increase availability of child care or enhance professionalism in the field, but virtually all aimed to provide baseline information for the future and increase knowledge of child care issues. On the other hand, most development projects endeavoured to enhance professionalism in the field and to meet the training needs of providers, but few aspired to provide baseline information for the future. Demonstration projects were more likely than other types to aim to increase the availability of care and to increase child care opportunities.

According to respondents, several factors prevented projects from totally achieving their goals. Mentioned most frequently were lack of time (6% of project representatives said this), lack of appropriate facilities (5%), and new needs identified through the project (3%).

Asked what they considered to have been the most successful aspect of the project, most said that their goals had been successfully achieved. Many said they provided a needed service or product, others proved a need existed, others cited a positive response to their service or product, and others mentioned improvements in networking or infrastructure.

Most often cited as the least successful aspect of the project was inability to build on the results, because other on-going funding could not be secured, or because parents resisted paying more when CCIF funding ended, or because the project was too short-lived, or due to poor dissemination of results. This calls into question the longer term impact of many CCIF projects.

As far as unexpected outcomes are concerned, most respondents identified positive surprises, many involving positive reactions to the service or product, or network building, raising the profile of the organization or service, or a high degree of demand for the product. Some respondents cited something negative that was unexpected. No single negative factor predominated, although a few respondents complained that parents were not using the services as much as they had indicated they would.

Table 5.1 Degree to Which Project Goals Were Achieved¹⁰

GOAL	Extent to which goals were achieved				
	Totally Achieved	Partially Achieved	Minimally Achieved	Not At All Achieved	Not Applicable
To increase the general availability of child care	48.0%	36.0%	14.0%	2.0%	69.5%
To increase child care opportunities for a group	45.6	41.2	10.3	2.9	58.8
To increase child care options and models	51.2	35.7	13.1	0.0	48.5
To provide baseline info for the future	57.7	35.6	6.7	0.0	36.2
To improve the quality of child care programming	55.5	39.5	4.2	0.8	28.3
To increase knowledge of child care issues	58.6	35.3	6.0	0.0	20.4
To increase awareness of available resources in community	49.1	43.8	6.3	0.9	32.5
To improve info sharing and linkages in child care community	53.7	39.0	6.5	0.8	25.9
To enhance professionalism in the child care field	53.4	39.8	6.8	0.0	37.6
To identify training needs of service providers	52.2	42.2	5.6	0.0	44.1
To meet the training needs of service providers	41.1	46.7	11.2	0.9	35.5
To improve the working conditions of child care providers	36.4	43.6	18.2	1.8	65.8
Other#	64.0	32.0	4.0	0.0	84.9

e.g., develop infrastructure, influence policy makers, provide resources.

Source: CCIF Survey of Project Sponsors

N=166

¹⁰

This table shows what proportion of cases answered "not applicable" but these cases are then dropped for the calculation of percentages in the other columns.

5.2 End Products

Table 5.2 lists the end products developed through CCIF projects. Final reports accounted for 63% of the end products, publications for 32%, and audio-video products for only 5% of projects. The plurality (25%) of end products focused on professional development/training of child care staff. About 12% were aimed at parent education, and 12% were research reports or publications.

Table 5.2 CCIF End Products

End Product Area Addressed	End Product		
	Report	Audio-Video	Publication
Applied research studies	45	0	17
Minority children	5	0	4
Rural children	20	0	4
Special needs	18	1	17
Emergency/p.t./shift care	12	0	4
Workplace care	9	2	7
Professional development	68	16	46
Hub models	12	1	1
Inuit children	1	0	0
Parent/public educ.	32	4	26
School-age	21	0	6
Needs assessments	40	0	6
Models of service	16	0	7
Cultural programming	4	1	8
Total	303	25	153

Source: CIS November 1994

(34 missing cases)

Usefulness of End Products

Interviewees were asked how useful the end products were for policy makers, service providers, and parents. There were two basic responses provided by CCIF staff. One was that no one really knew how useful the end products were since there had been no systematic analysis of the end products. CCIF used to send a questionnaire to projects that had produced something but the practice had stopped. By this school of thought, there was plenty of useful information available to parents, service providers, and policy makers, but how much it was used was unknown. Some CCIF staff were dubious that the information was reaching parents. The same group was doubtful that much of the information, though potentially valuable, was used by policy-makers, especially at the provincial level.

The more common point of view on the usefulness of end products was "It depends on the project." Some end products were judged to be very useful, principally for service providers. One informant stated that service providers never had information before and the end products gave them the tools to work with (e.g., guides, manuals, training, etc.) which saves them time and money. Some end products, particularly national research studies, were considered to be valuable input into the child care policy-making process. And this group thought that "Parents are a lot more aware of what's out there" in terms of child care and could make more informed choices.

5.3 Application of Results Beyond the Original Project

Three-quarters of the *demonstration projects* had been visited by people interested in developing a similar program. One project representative asserted that 900 people had visited for this purpose; another claimed 250 people had visited; and six others said that over 100 people did so. The average (mean) number of people visiting was 71, the median number 25. And perhaps the ultimate compliment to the project and measure of usefulness of the project was that 39% of the models of service tested by the demonstration projects were adopted by another organization or individual, according to survey respondents.

Most representatives of *development projects* thought their work would directly benefit child care providers. All groups listed in Table 5.3 were said to have directly or indirectly benefited by the majority of these projects.

Table 5.3 Intended Beneficiaries of Development Projects

Group	Proportion benefitting	
	Directly	Indirectly
Parents	45.0%	37.6%
Children	43.1	37.6
Child care providers	68.8	11.0
Child care administrators	37.6	22.9
Educators/trainers	41.3	22.0
Policy makers	32.1	24.8

Source: Survey of Project Sponsors

N=109

Over 73% of *research project* representatives surveyed said their findings had been used. The following types of institutions were said to have used the projects' research findings:

<u>Institution</u>	<u>% of Projects</u>
School/school board	24.5%
Post-secondary institution	35.3
Municipal government	12.7
Provincial government	39.2
Federal government	20.6
Tribal council/Indian band	17.6
Child care organizations	54.9
Caregiver associations	28.4
Community groups	25.5
Public libraries	10.8
Other researchers	28.4
Other	12.7

N=77

Approximately 78% of respondents of projects that *enhanced information services* held that their project's products had been used by other organizations or individuals. The number of individuals reported to have used the product or service devised ranged from 10 to 10,000 with an average (mean) of 1,265.

Every CCIF official interviewed had examples of results being applied beyond the original project. Examples follow.

- The final report of the NB Power project developed a manual to let people know how to set up a workplace daycare which could be applied by other programs.
- A project conducted by the Regina library hired a resource person who went to the day care centres and trained the providers in story telling. Subsequently, the resource person conducted workshops and produced 2 books on story telling which have enjoyed wide circulation across Canada.
- Some researchers are using the data from the National Child Care Study to investigate the labour force participation rate of single mothers and the impact of child care on the decision to enter or not enter the labour force.
- Another research project into infectious diseases in child care centres was done in Québec and the Hospital for Sick Children is using the data from that research.
- Meadow Lake project representatives have been to every community to present findings on how to address culturally appropriate training needs (for aboriginals). The program was adapted in other areas and by other universities.

Provincial representatives had little knowledge about whether the results of any CCIF project had been used elsewhere; they certainly could provide no information on frequency of use. And they offered no reasons why some results may not have been used. By contrast, all NGO representatives had knowledge of project results -- usually their own projects -- that had been used by other organizations.

Respondents tended to cite well known studies such as the National Child Care Survey, the infant videos, or the Meadow Lake project as ones that have had broad application. Also mentioned by the provinces were the national rural network recently developed in Manitoba, a survey funded by CCIF to find out why employees were not using a work-site child care, a training program by the Alberta Family Home Day Care Association for

home day care providers, a national survey of child care staff salaries, and modules from the distance education project in Newfoundland. Other projects listed by NGOs follow:

- Unions in particular were interested in the Caring for Living Study because of the facts and figures regarding child care provision/costs/demand.
- The West Coast Child Resource Centre, by virtue of being an information type centre, takes calls and provides assistance to people and groups nation-wide.
- A program run by the Burnaby School Board which provided child care for teen parents has attracted a lot of interest.
- The Family Day Care and Care Givers' Guide has been distributed to 15,000 agencies/individuals.

NGOs also mentioned products they had used that originated from other CCIF projects including the distance education package developed in Newfoundland, products from SpecialLink including videos, and training material and videos from the project "Making Friends."

Types of organizations/individuals using the products were community colleges, child care organizations, parents, government, and community health nurses.

5.4 Analysis of Project Results

There is a synopsis of projects in a catalogue of resources but no analysis has been done. CCIF funded the Canadian Child Care Federation to produce a book that summarized certain projects. They produced two publications -- one short and another with a one-page description of those projects that had findings or results. The publications were disseminated to child care organizations, provincial governments, universities/colleges and larger resource centres and libraries.

According to one interviewee "There was no conscious effort to analyze the results of projects in one area (rural care, for example) to find the overall lessons learned. It would have been a good idea to do it." Another interviewee added "There was no analysis of

projects as they finished and no system to ensure they were building blocks. There was a lack of planning and assessment resources."

5.5 Lessons Learned From Projects

There was no one theme to draw from responses of CCIF interviewees respecting lessons learned from each area of activity. Indeed, no two people cited the same lesson from any area (except two people said that more research is needed). They each had different ideas derived from their experience with CCIF for defining future programs like CCIF. Accordingly, their responses will be listed (in no particular order).

Demonstration Projects

Among the lessons learned from demonstration projects:

- If a program is going to fund these projects there should be a clear understanding with the province. CCIF should have explained the intent more clearly to the provinces and should only have solicited such projects after consultation with the province.
- Frequent on-site monitoring and support is needed for these projects so that the groups feel the program is providing support rather than just policing.
- Demonstration projects provided a good basis for the design of the new first nations direct service initiative and will drive the design of how funding will flow. They identified all kinds of things such as ensuring first nations control over standards which accommodate provincial jurisdictions. They tested out the real costs for core services and the limitations of sharing funding with other related programs.
- It may be necessary to consider allocations to different priority areas building on the knowledge accrued from CCIF. One of the criteria should not be that the area was underfunded, rather a specific area of need should be identified.

Another theme emerging from the peer reviewers was the importance of having independent evaluators assess at least some of the larger demonstration projects. One reviewer put it very clearly when she recommended that more careful consideration

should be given to evaluating demonstration projects funded by CCIF. She stated that the evaluators should work cooperatively with the people who developed the program, but that the evaluators should be independent of the project. The advantages of having an independent evaluation group are that it increases the likelihood that crucial information will be documented, it enhances the credibility of the report, and it increases the ability with which one can assess whether the project being demonstrated can be implemented in other settings. This viewpoint was shared by another reviewer who qualified her review of a project by pointing out that it was difficult to evaluate the impacts of this project because she had to rely entirely upon information supplied to her by the staff who had implemented the project, and there was no source of information independent of the project.

Case study demonstration project representatives listed several very specific lessons learned from their projects. Among them: be aware of provincial licensing requirements and how they might restrict serving the community's needs; people should get ideas from their community about what services are needed and remember that everything, no matter how small, makes a difference; it is necessary to work closely with the parents who are going to use the day care to find out the type of programming they want; it is important to involve the community to see what other resources are available in the community and to work together; be aware of available funding before starting to set up a centre; be aware of bureaucracy on every level and what hoops you have to jump through; always be ready to be willing to change to meet community needs; care passionately about the program, and be prepared to work long, hard hours for little pay; it is important to try to bring new ideas to the program, and to try and be continually innovative; the staff involved in the program should care deeply about children.

Development Projects

Among the lessons learned from development projects:

- There should have been consultations with the field to identify areas that were missed or where there was more urgency. This would have enabled the program to zero in more quickly on priority areas. There must be a global picture. If the program plans better and sets priorities it would be able to then solicit the types of projects required.

- It may be necessary to have specialists to assess proposals.
- There is still a demand for resource material and what is available should be consolidated. More information is needed on what is available "because people don't know."
- Partnerships with institutions are fine but aboriginal groups need guidelines and guarantees to ensure their ownership of the curriculum and program. Institutions need to respect that information comes from the community and a mechanism is needed to ensure community ownership at the design stage.
- One has to remember when dealing with small grass roots organizations that they need more time at the outset to ensure they are clear about their objectives.

Among the specific lessons cited by case study development project representatives: a project of this nature should be volunteer-driven as this will result in a strong commitment to work together; one of the best ways to facilitate home based child care would be to have a parents' association in tandem with the child care providers which could oversee each necessary stage of the provision of care process, as well as function as an intermediary between the family and the child care provider; ensure that others are aware of the project -- be an active communicator; be wise not to raise expectations which cannot be met; place focus on those individuals who provide the service -- there is value in anchoring a project at the grassroots level; be prepared for hard work; realize that a project of this nature requires a substantial amount of money.

Research Projects

Among the lessons learned from research projects:

- It is necessary to follow up on results and identify areas for further research. There must be a realistic way of setting priorities to address needs in a significant way. Interventions must be planned strategically and the capabilities of project personnel must be assessed for their ability to carry a project out.
- There needs to be more research. There is still a lot required particularly in how to incorporate aboriginal traditions regarding the family and child rearing into child care.

5.6 Survival of Projects After Funding Ended

Continued funding is only pertinent for some types of projects. It does not apply to research projects, or most needs assessments (though a small percentage of needs assessments were the basis for demonstration projects funded by CCIF). Development projects such as a training manual or seminar were not meant to be on-going.

The issue is important chiefly for demonstration projects. For these projects, CCIF endeavoured to fund projects that were in line with provincial policies. The express intention was to fund only those demonstration projects that could secure funding from other sources once CCIF funding expired. "The program tried not to create orphans but this was sometimes difficult to do." Proposals were required to show a continuation plan. Because demonstration projects created the expectation of future funding, some provinces were not keen on them (e.g., Quebec, the territories).

Given the policy to fund only those projects that had a commitment of on-going funding, it is not surprising to learn that most demonstration projects did secure funding after CCIF, according to staff. Estimates of the proportion that continued varied by province. In Ontario and B.C., for instance, the large majority of demonstration projects had secured funding from alternate sources. The proportion was lower, around half, for on-reserve projects. According to those who returned a project self-evaluation, 85% of all projects survived the end of funding¹¹. Buttressing this, 85% of demonstration projects surveyed continued delivering services after CCIF funding expired. Thus, the short-term survival rate is impressive. Within one year, however, only 54% were still operating. And by the time the CCIF program ended, only 46% of demonstration projects were still in operation.

Generally, these projects were picked up by the provincial government. "The provinces are the only ones likely to fund projects since there is a lack of interest and/or money on the part of other organizations." Occasionally a municipality continued the funding. Several projects involving service delivery were able to sustain themselves through fund

¹¹ This may be seriously biased, since most of those projects that did not return a survey may well be defunct.

raising, parent fees, provincial contributions and contributions from major corporations. Also NGOs may pick up parts of a project. In rare instances projects were able to remain completely intact through fund raising and parent fees.

Except for the Well Beings and "La garde au domicile du parent" projects¹², all case study projects attempted to secure funding from alternate sources as CCIF funding was coming to an end. For the most part, the sponsoring organizations have approached provincial and federal departments for funding. The only non-government sources mentioned were small private foundations, the United Way, a union, and corporations. Two projects, Maggie's and Child Care Connection-Nova Scotia, got small corporate donations.

The aboriginal case study projects have tended to rely on the federal government because most of the provinces will not fully fund on-reserve projects. As of late June, 1995, the bands were still attempting to obtain funding to continue their projects. Also, the Assembly of First Nations is lobbying for more money for aboriginal child care programs. Among the federal departments/ initiatives approached by aboriginal case study projects: the Department of Indian Affairs, Canada Employment Projects, the First Nations Child Care Initiative Fund and Aboriginal Head Start, Brighter Futures, and Child Care Visions. The bands did explore the possibility of funding from the provincial governments, but have gotten nothing or too little to run the day care centre. Two bands obtained gaming licences and run bingo games and lotteries to help fund the centres. None of the aboriginal projects has secured stable funding as yet. But the new federal programs give them cause for optimism.

Some non-native case study projects have fared better. Some have obtained enough provincial funding to operate the child care centre (e.g., Lakeview). Club 6-12 depends mainly on fees, with some provincial support. Others have secured partial provincial funding for their development projects (e.g., CCC-NS). One got bridging money from the federal program Brighter Futures, and one from Child Care Visions.

¹² In the case of La garde au domicile du parent, project sponsors sought additional money only for translation of the final report into English. They have not yet been successful, which is proving to be a problem, since they are constantly asked for the report in English.

CCC-NS earns some money (16% of its original operating budget) from the organization's own initiatives (e.g. corporate sponsorships, workshop revenues, consultations, publications, and "piggy-backing" onto activities conducted by other organizations). SpecialLink managed to get funding from various sources: Health Promotions, Children's Mental Health, Disabled Person's Secretariat, IWK - Children's Hospital Foundation, Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (part of Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Canadian Union of Postal Workers, and small private foundations.

One project, the Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre, was set up in anticipation of alternate funding. In the first year, the project received a substantial portion of the total funding contribution; in the second year, it received somewhat less; and, in the final year, still less than the previous year. The rationale for this was based on the idea that the centre would acquire alternate funding during the course of its development - and it did. In the first year, municipal and provincial governments provided some funding. In the second year, additional funds were obtained from casino proceeds. In addition, the volunteer board initiated several of its own fund raising efforts. Funding from CCIF was used to support staff positions and some operating expenses, while monies received from the additional funding sources were used for the development of all of the organization's services (including the library).

5.7 Conclusion

In general, the evidence seems to suggest that most CCIF projects accomplished the goals they set for themselves. Moreover, many -- though it is not possible to specify the proportion -- produced potentially useful end products. The key question is how many end products are actually used by others? Survey results suggest that most products/services have been used by others beyond the original project. Some interviewees, however, expressed some doubt that most end products have been useful to others. But other informants felt that many products have been useful, though they tended to point to a fairly small group of particularly successful projects (usually those selected for case study).

One factor that has limited the usefulness of CCIF projects is that there has never been an overall analysis of CCIF projects. Such an analysis should be done to systematically derive lessons from the body of CCIF projects, and to identify areas that received too much or too little attention.

CHAPTER SIX: PROGRAM IMPACTS

This chapter reports on what CCIF has accomplished according to those contacted. It begins with an analysis of the program's impact on the central child care issues. Then it examines impacts in several other areas: development of new models of service, training and working conditions for child care providers, child care infrastructure, awareness of available resources, provincial child care effort, and child care research. Finally, it presents the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

6.1 CCIF Impact on Key Child Care Issues

Table 6.1 lists 13 current child care issues and rates CCIF effectiveness as judged by questionnaire respondents. In general, survey respondents gave CCIF high marks on the issues. For most of the issues, large majorities -- most often in excess of 85% -- felt that CCIF was very effective or effective. They were particularly impressed with CCIF's record at increasing knowledge of child care issues, improving the quality of programming and increasing awareness of available resources. In only three areas did considerable portions (over 20%) of the sample say that CCIF was ineffective: increasing the availability of child care; establishing a process for exchange of information; and improving working conditions of child care providers. Still, though, majorities believed that CCIF was effective or very effective at addressing these areas. For instance, 73% said the program was effective or very effective at increasing the availability of child care.

Table 6.1 Effectiveness of CCIF in Addressing Child Care Issues¹³

Target Group	Very Effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very Ineffective	Don't Know
Improving quality standards of child care	33.3%	56.9%	8.1%	1.6%	22.6%
Improving quality of programming	37.9	58.6	1.7	1.7	26.6
Increasing availability of child care	21.1	52.2	20.0	6.7	41.6
Increasing child care options and models	32.2	61.9	4.2	1.7	24.4
Increasing knowledge of child care issues	39.3	55.0	4.3	1.4	11.4
Increasing awareness of available resources	37.0	57.5	4.7	0.8	19.6
Establishing process for exchange of info	33.0	49.1	15.1	2.8	32.1
Improving info sharing in child care community	37.9	51.7	6.9	2.6	26.1
Improve linkages in child care community	37.0	52.1	8.4	2.5	25.6
Enhancing professionalism in child care field	39.7	62.7	5.1	2.5	25.8
Identifying the training needs of service providers	24.5	64.3	6.1	5.1	38.4
Meeting the training needs of service providers	20.0	64.2	10.5	5.3	39.1
Improving working conditions of child care providers	16.7	46.2	25.6	11.5	50.0

Source: Survey of Project Sponsors

N=160

Data from this table will be referred to throughout this chapter.

¹³ This table shows what proportion of cases answered "do not know," but these cases are then dropped for the calculation of percentages in the other columns.

6.2 CCIF Impact on Child Care Quality and Accessibility

This section recounts the most important factors in achieving affordable, accessible, quality child care in Canada. It then moves to an assessment of how well the activities funded by CCIF addressed these central issues.

Key Factors for Success

The key to accessible child care according to CCIF staff, and provincial and NGO representatives is affordability. In turn, affordability depends on public subsidies, say many interviewees. "Unless the government commits to funding a public, non-profit system, people will not be able to afford child care and therefore it won't be accessible."

Other important factors mentioned by interviewees were the need for research and program development; having a flexible child care service; an informed public; a public will that child care matters; national standards; adequate salaries (to boost available staff), portable training qualifications, and community planning to look at more strategic placement of child care centres.

Interviewees listed several factors important to achieving quality child care. Most often mentioned was that caregivers be appropriately trained. "Trained workers are important factors in quality child care -- they know about children and their development and how to optimize development."

Also important is adequate funding. "Funding determines quality care. A shortage of money directly undermines quality. For example, a program can't replace a sick qualified worker."

Combining these two factors yields a third: "Adequate pay is necessary to compensate for the training otherwise providers won't stay in the system." Another CCIF consultant contended that 80% of a service's cost is for personnel, and for quality care it is necessary to keep trained people in the field -- which is dependent on wages and working conditions.

The quality of child care, according to several CCIF staff and NGO representatives, is improved when stringent provincial standards are in place. Among the most important considerations are high staff/child ratios, an appropriate and healthy physical environment, age-appropriate curricula, an abundance of resource materials. The existence of national standards regarding quality was also thought to be important.

Other aspects were related by one CCIF interviewee:

- Informed parents -- Parents must be informed about what constitutes quality child care so they can demand it.
- Greater availability of child care -- "Diversity breeds excellence when there is an adequate supply and parents can exercise choice."
- Culturally appropriate child care.
- Auspice -- "Research has established that quality is more achievable in non-profit facilities."

Success at Addressing Key Issues

With program delivery a provincial jurisdiction, CCIF could not address the key issues -- quality and accessibility of care -- directly. It therefore set out to improve these aspects indirectly through various means. This section explores how successful CCIF was seen to be in addressing these issues.

Quality

Because the provinces are responsible for child care programs, CCIF could have no direct affect on quality standards. CCIF staff maintained that the program had an indirect effect, however. They asserted that CCIF has promoted quality through the development of materials, resources and conferences. "To some degree, by establishing that quality is meaningful, measurable and important, CCIF has been very instrumental in bringing the issue forward." For instance, more child care employers are wanting their staff to have an ECE qualification and this has raised expectations of child care. "There have been a number of statements of 'quality' and there is a shared understanding and coalescence of agreement on quality child care." According to CCIF staff, largely due to

CCIF, there is now a good base of information and easy access to it. The distribution of information across the country made everyone aware of the quality issue. The information contributed to policy decisions and the debate around what constitutes quality child care. "CCIF was particularly influential in terms of quality care because now people are talking about national standards and quality is now commonly defined." The Child Care Federation, funded by CCIF, has developed national standards which "made quite a difference," as one CCIF consultant asserted.

CCIF staff cited some studies that they thought had positively affected quality standards. For example, a major study regarding quality was conducted by universities across Atlantic Canada. "This study may not directly improve quality but will give a good picture of current quality and where the problems are." Also, CCIF funded a project to develop a manual for school-based care.

All but one NGO representative and four of the six provincial officials asserted that CCIF had had an impact on quality standards for child care: some characterized the impact as significant. Provinces thought the main routes to improvement have been through the funding of training and research projects. On the other hand, NGOs believed that quality improvements had been achieved chiefly through increasing awareness. CCIF brought to light "what quality child care means" and heightened awareness about the importance of quality; through this it helped to raise standards of quality in Canada. The projects funded were said to have brought forward relevant issues, highlighted quality child care in many child care settings, allowed communities to experiment with different models of care, helped promote proper training of staff, encouraged the appreciation of quality care on reserves, supported Canadian child care research, and provided opportunities for people in the field to share their expertise and knowledge and to offer support and encouragement to others. On the negative side, "Now people know what standards are but there is no money to implement them."

The one dissenting NGO informant thought that whatever influence CCIF had on quality was haphazard. "If it happened to fund a project where the concept was strong and it had good people involved then the CCIF had a great project. However, it just as easily funded projects that had a strong concept but weaker support (in terms of personnel) and

so the project was of a lower quality. There was no control for this." Also, when the CCIF did have a great project on its hands it "never went out of its way to promote it" and spread the word to other groups/ organizations/communities.

Survey respondents felt that quality of care had improved slightly or greatly since 1988 in all areas listed in Table 6.2 with the exceptions of extended care, emergency care and employer supported care. They thought the biggest improvements took place in the areas of Native/Inuit care, care for disabled children, parent resource centres, and community-based care. Note that large proportions of respondents felt they had no basis on which to judge any change in quality and stated they did not know.

Table 6.2 Change in Quality of Child Care Programs Since CCIF was Established¹⁴

Type of Child Care	Extent of change in quality in child care programs, 1988 to 1995					
	Increased Greatly	Increased Slightly	No Change	Declined Slightly	Declined Greatly	Don't know
Extended hours of care	14.1%	32.9%	50.6%	2.4%	0.0%	42.6%
Emergency care	10.8	17.6	70.3	1.4	0.0	50.3
Employer supported care	12.2	36.6	46.4	2.4	2.4	44.6
Community based care	21.1	48.4	25.3	4.2	1.1	36.2
Care in rural communities	20.8	42.9	33.8	1.3	1.3	47.3
Aboriginal/Inuit care	28.6	39.7	28.6	3.2	0.0	57.1
Care for minority children	14.5	37.7	44.9	2.9	0.0	53.1
Care for disabled children	28.4	49.5	18.9	2.1	1.1	37.1
Parent resource centres	28.4	44.3	26.1	1.1	0.0	40.9

Source: Survey of Project Sponsors

N=149

Most survey respondents asserted that CCIF deserved some credit for the improvements in quality since 1988. Of those who had an opinion (36% did not know), 8% said that improvements in quality were totally attributable to CCIF; 49% said the improvements

¹⁴ This table shows what proportion of cases answered "do not know," but these cases are then dropped for the calculation of percentages in the other columns.

were ascribable to CCIF to a great extent; and 38% said to a small extent. Only 5% contended that CCIF was not at all responsible. Those who believed CCIF had affected quality thought it had done so through several means: publications/videos that raised awareness, training or education workshops for providers, research projects that studied quality; building of networks of child care providers to share information; and dissemination of information.

Comparative Impact on Quality

Unlike CCIF, provincial governments can have a direct effect on quality. "Provincial governments fund actual services so their decisions have immediate impact." By contrast, CCIF's effect is indirect as discussed previously. CCIF helps provinces improve their services by providing them with information, but most CCIF and provincial interviewees held that the provincial governments had a greater impact on quality than did CCIF.

The feeling among NGO representatives was different though. They thought that, although provincial governments were certainly in the position to have more of an effect on improving quality than CCIF, it was nevertheless CCIF that had actually had a greater impact. The primary reason was that CCIF had money to dedicate to the issue, and most provincial governments did not. Through creating and diffusing knowledge about what constitutes quality child care, and spurring provincial governments to pay more attention to quality child care, CCIF has played a more important role. One dissenting opinion was that provincial governments have had a greater impact, if for no other reason than they have been organized and active in child care for a longer period of time.

With respect to universities, research centres, and other agencies the consensus among interviewees was that these groups would not have become involved without funding from CCIF. To NGOs and CCIF, this meant that CCIF had a greater effect on quality than did universities, colleges or research centres. They coaxed universities and research centres to do research, and colleges into recognizing the need to concentrate on curriculum development. Before CCIF they were "slow to change." Provinces were more vague, saying that CCIF's impact was indirect, that of other organizations, direct. One province maintained that colleges have had a greater impact than CCIF on quality

by providing appropriate training: "This certainly provided more of an impact than isolated projects."

According to CCIF staff, professional associations would not have existed without CCIF. In other words, to the extent they have any impact on quality, CCIF can take much of the credit for it. And, "they had a lot of impact since they were the means by which information got into the field." "Through CCIF conferences, professional associations became educated regarding quality needs and took on the responsibility of meeting those needs." Most NGOs acknowledged that CCIF deserves a lot of credit concerning the work professional associations do to augment quality. But none was willing to concede that CCIF was the more important party. They seemed to think both were equally important.

Accessibility

Most CCIF staff and provincial representatives stated that CCIF had little or no impact on the availability of child care services in Canada, but hastened to add this was not its purpose. "CCIF has not made any impact. The program was intended to be part of a larger child care strategy which, (through cost-sharing) with the provinces, would substantially increase the number of spaces available. The collapse of the strategy left a lot of frustration since it was not worthwhile funding demonstration projects that were not going to be picked up."

There was one exception to this as noted by several interviewees: the program created child care where otherwise there would have been none for on-reserve aboriginals, and Inuit. CCIF was also said to have increased spaces for off-reserve aboriginals. A disproportionate amount of effort went to aboriginal groups which CCIF contends are the most under-served population in the country. Before CCIF, there was no capacity to provide child care to this population; now there is a modest amount of capacity and knowledge of child care in this population, according to CCIF.

There was also the point of view within CCIF and some NGOs that the program helped create new services through feasibility studies and demonstration projects. For instance, one CCIF consultant contended that after-school and workplace care projects brought

about a significant change in the availability of such care. Judging by the case study demonstration projects, the availability and quality of child care certainly improved in their formerly under-served communities. And given that few if any of the case study projects would have gone ahead without CCIF funding, CCIF deserves credit for the improvements. The improvements were very localized, however.

On the other hand, NGOs worried that the gains in availability will be lost once CCIF funding is gone.

Related to availability is child care programming. Here too, CCIF has had an indirect impact, according to its staff. "CCIF is able to feed into policy by identifying what works and what doesn't as well as the best approaches by means of in-house expertise." Staff claimed an indirect impact in several areas:

- Some projects developed curricula and materials that are culturally appropriate.
- CCIF allowed some programs to be more sensitive and adaptive to the needs of minority cultures and linguistic groups as well as children with special needs by providing programming tools and resource materials.
- CCIF had an impact especially with regard to integration of children with special needs.

Two provinces were convinced that CCIF had had no impact at all on child care programming. Three others mentioned specific areas where CCIF had affected programming: multicultural programming, mainstreaming special needs children, and development of training programs. And one provincial official described the effect as very valuable.

NGOs thought CCIF's influence was indirect, but positive. "A lot of preliminary work has been done . . . which (has) resulted in positive changes." Information sharing and facilitating dialogue between the various players in child care led to more awareness about appropriate programming.

Survey respondents were asked to render their verdict on CCIF's effectiveness at increasing the availability of child care for CCIF priority groups. As shown in Table 6.3,

Evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund

with two exceptions, the plurality of respondents felt that availability of all types of care had increased slightly since 1988. In the cases of extended hours of care and emergency care, half or more felt that there had been no change or that availability had actually dropped.

Table 6.3 Change in Availability of Child Care Programs Since CCIF was Established¹⁵

Type of Child Care	Extent of change in availability in child care programs, 1988 to 1995					
	Increased Greatly	Increased Slightly	No Change	Declined Slightly	Declined Greatly	Don't know
Extended hours of care	13.7%	32.5%	52.1%	1.7%	0.0%	24.0%
Emergency care	4.6	23.9	66.1	5.5	0.0	29.7
Employer supported care	7.0	45.6	44.7	2.6	0.0	26.0
Community based care	28.2	39.3	24.8	6.8	0.9	24.0
Care in rural communities	11.6	52.6	32.6	2.1	1.1	37.5
Aboriginal/Inuit care	17.9	57.7	20.5	1.3	2.6	49.0
Care for minority children	12.9	49.4	32.9	4.7	0.0	44.4
Care for disabled children	22.4	55.2	15.5	6.9	0.0	26.1
Parent resource centres	24.5	50.0	20.8	3.8	0.9	31.6

Source: Survey of Project Sponsors

N=157

Respondents were divided on how much credit CCIF deserved for these modest improvements. Almost 40% said they did not know how much of the change could be ascribed to CCIF. Of those who knew, only 5% felt that increases in availability was totally attributable to the activities of CCIF. About 39% believed that CCIF was responsible to a great extent and 37% said to a small extent. Nearly one-fifth stated that none of the increases could be credited to CCIF. Those who felt CCIF had nothing to do with the increases in availability tended to say that this was a provincial responsibility; since it was outside of CCIF's mandate, the program had little effect on availability. Those who thought CCIF deserved some credit for the improvements said that this had been accomplished through funding projects, especially demonstration projects or feasibility studies that were catalysts to permanent funding.

¹⁵

This table shows what proportion of cases answered "do not know," but these cases are then dropped for the calculation of percentages in the other columns.

6.3 Impact on Development of New Models of Service

Although CCIF might have had an indirect effect through funding for projects that focused on developing new models, most provincial officials interviewed felt CCIF had little impact on new models of service. One thought that CCIF had been innovative in the area of rural care.

There were two distinctly different schools of thought among NGO representatives with regard to development of new models of service. One group had a point of view similar to that of the provinces. Though allowing that new models had been tried, this group asserted that the models either faded away after funding, or their impact had been mitigated by the quality of the project. Thus the ultimate impact was negligible.

The other group held that "This was CCIF's forte." Many CCIF projects represented "new models that people know would work with support." Survey respondents thought that CCIF was very effective (32%) or effective (62%) at increasing child care options and models. CCIF staff seemed to agree, providing many examples of innovative models of service funded by CCIF:

- CCIF co-funded with NB Power a feasibility study for workplace care which NB Power would then fund.
- A francophone after-school model in Moncton was funded for 2.5 years and has been self-sustaining for the last 6 years.
- A program run by nuns provided care to children of immigrants and refugees. This program was sensitive not only to cultural differences among the children but also to the trauma many of these children had gone through before reaching Canada.
- The development of a day care centre in Saskatoon for teen parents who were not in school but were in training or looking for work. The province picked it up at the end of CCIF funding and put it in a school.
- One flexible model delivered care in the child's home and provided support for the caregiver. However, this model was not picked up.

- The Meadow Lake project developed hub modeling in an appropriate way. The Meadow Lake career ladder in which aboriginal people were being trained to incorporate language and heritage in child care programs.
- In B.C. the Shushwap band took the ideas of the Maori language nest model and built them into a child care program. In this project, elders engaged in traditional activities within the child care program. Interaction between the elders and the children was built in to the curriculum. This project is still going on but is struggling.

According to CCIF respondents, many demonstration projects were testing new models of service. "CCIF tried everything except a fully comprehensive service." For instance, resource centres were developed through demonstration projects. In some cases, rural models were developed which affected availability in those areas.

In total 60 different communities across Canada had CCIF demonstration projects. Every province but Newfoundland had demonstration projects. Leading the way was British Columbia with 15 such projects, followed by Quebec with 10.

6.4 Impact on Training and Working Conditions for Child Care Providers

CCIF made a significant impact on training, according to NGOs. Via support of projects focusing on improving training (e.g., highlighting major gaps in training programs), and conferences and workshops on the subject, CCIF has had a positive influence on training. They also felt that CCIF had a beneficial impact on working conditions by raising the awareness of the need for professionalism which should be accorded to child care providers.

CCIF staff claimed the program has had a major impact on training, but little or no impact on working conditions. For example, a project was co-funded with Cabot College to develop an accreditation package for caregivers which will increase the quality of care, programming and training. CCIF projects created training in two territories. It improved

training of aboriginal child care providers by funding curriculum development that never existed before in the aboriginal community. Before CCIF there were no specialized aboriginal ECE programs now there is one in B.C. and one in Meadow Lake which is accredited. They have been able to establish on-going training where none existed before.

The provinces' verdict was split on CCIF's impact. Two provinces said CCIF had no impact. The other four thought CCIF deserved credit for improving training and working conditions. They ascribed the positive effects to projects centered around training and working conditions, and research projects.

Survey respondents were also equivocal. As shown in Table 6.1, about 63% thought CCIF was very effective or effective in improving working conditions of child care providers. But the other 37% said it was ineffective or very ineffective at this.

6.5 Impact on Child Care Infrastructure

Activities Aimed at Strengthening Infrastructure

According to CCIF staff, the key activities undertaken to strengthen the child care infrastructure were:

- Helping create an infrastructure -- CCIF invested in every national organization. It funded a lot of groups and solidified the system of information exchange.
- Networking -- The program linked organizations, especially through conferences.
- Resource centres -- CCIF supported activities through the creation of resource centres. It also enhanced centres to bring in new services such as the creation of a registry of available child care services to be used by employers.
- Individual projects -- CCIF supported projects dealing with training and professional development. Dissemination of the end products was aimed at informing child care professionals and parents.

Perceived Efficacy of the Activities on Infrastructure

CCIF interviewees claimed three main effects of these efforts on child care organizations. First, CCIF was said to be particularly successful in seeding organizations which defend the interests of certain groups and create information. "In this way a knowledge base was developed." Second, CCIF funding was said to have allowed some organizations to network and to have a stronger voice. As a result, some child care organizations became better organized, polished and focused. Third, the staff held that funded activities have increased the visibility of organizations, which has placed more demands on them and given them more responsibility. These effects have broadened organizations' outlook. The activities, especially the conferences, have also developed professionalism among workers. They made them aware of different approaches and fostered pride in their profession.

"CCIF had quite a significant impact on the professionalism of staff." The organizations have done a lot of training and professional development activities. Workers are involved in the network. "Support has given them a sense of profession even though the pay is low. The turnover rate is very low." Also, CCIF supported a large wages and working conditions study which was widely acclaimed for the information it provided.

CCIF staff made the following case for the effect of the program on linkages and exchange of information. The program brought a national perspective and provided support to national organizations. It produced tangible goods such as training manuals. CCIF empowered organizations and pulled them together. A lot of linkages have been developed resulting in a good exchange of information both within the provinces and nationally. In the beginning, there was one child care NGO and many small organizations "doing their own thing." Through CCIF it has been possible to establish regional organizations that are a vital component of the system. CCIF was able to give them information regarding Canadian resources, to support conferences and bring in caregivers, to form support groups, to assist in funding of newsletters, etc. Through these means, CCIF has facilitated information exchange. The program has very much affected the linkages and all players are talking about national standards. Because of CCIF's work, organizations are stronger -- they have matured so that they have been able to derive revenues by taking on contracts (although none are ever going to be self-

sufficient). However, at present they depend on contributions from governments at a time when the federal government is moving away from interest group funding. No organizations are strong enough to stand alone.

Survey respondents also believed that CCIF was effective or very effective at improving the infrastructure. From Table 6.1, we see that over 80% of respondents thought the program was effective at establishing a process for exchange of information, at improving information sharing in the child care community, and at improving linkages in the child care community.

There was no consensus among provincial or NGO interviewees on whether CCIF had strengthened the child care infrastructure. It depended on what they considered the infrastructure to be. Some provinces and all but one NGO considered it an informal network of child care professionals brought together via conferences, information sharing, and dialogue for the purpose of discussing policy and programming. These activities have helped to spawn and support child care organizations, to erect a network of agencies and individuals involved in child care, to build a body of knowledge, to increase community awareness, to increase sharing of ideas and information, and to enhance the professionalism of child care staff. These individuals thought that CCIF had made an important and lasting contribution to the child care infrastructure in Canada.

Another group thought of infrastructure as the development of specialized services, ongoing financing, and staffing or consolidation of services in child care. This group believed that the impact of CCIF had been modest. Without continuing funding "At the end of the day there really is no infrastructure."

Perceived Efficacy of the Activities on Provincial Standards for Child Care Qualifications

Most CCIF staff were of the opinion that it was not possible to attribute changes in provincial standards directly to CCIF. They did believe that they were just beginning to have a positive, indirect impact on provincial standards, however, especially in the area of licensing requirements. "Some (impacts) are still pretty minimal but the information is

available so that the child care profession and NGOs are better armed to make improvements in curricula for training."

The degree of perceived impact depended on the province. CCIF staff held that some provinces (e.g., Ontario) had good standards before CCIF, and hence the impact of the program on standards has been minimal. In other provinces -- mainly the Maritimes -- the effect has been more substantial. "The program influenced the provincial governments into increasing the qualification requirements . . . mainly in the Maritimes." Training standards were said to have improved in Saskatchewan, in part because of the Meadow Lake project.

6.6 Impact on Awareness of Available Resources

All CCIF staff and all but one NGO representative were in agreement that CCIF had had a considerable impact on awareness of available resources. Prior to the program, there were few resources available and what was there was known only locally. "CCIF has had a great impact on awareness -- there is now one network in the community although there is still much to be done." The dissenter remarked that although it had funded a number of excellent, highly successful projects, it had not made an effort to "spread the word" about them. For this reason, CCIF was judged to have had a minimal impact on the awareness of available resources in the country.

About 95% of survey respondents held that CCIF was effective or very effective at increasing awareness of available resources.

Among the means mentioned by CCIF staff to augment awareness of available resources:

- ☐ CCIF has had an impact through conferences, advertising, speaking at workshops, and newsletters.
- ☐ By virtue of reviewing all projects, provincial government have increased their awareness.

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- CCIF funded a forum that all provincial Directors of Day Care attend.
- CCIF has produced a manual of funded projects which has been circulated to governments and associations.
- A "huge amount" of requests for information came in from the public "which provides evidence that CCIF has done a good job of increasing awareness."
- CCIF had an impact on the flow of information through funding of groups like the Child Care Federation. The Federation compiled manuals on every project funded which are available to anyone.
- CCIF funded the Association of First Nations to do an overview of the information produced.

Most provincial representatives were unsure of the impact of CCIF on awareness of available resources. Those with an opinion tended to think that the child care community became much more aware as a result of CCIF, but that the public remains largely ignorant in this respect. The information might be there but few parents have gained access to it, in part due to inadequate dissemination.

CCIF and NGO informants also concurred that the program had a constructive impact on the flow of information between all players in the child care field. On the other hand, with one exception, provincial representatives opined that CCIF has not really helped improve the flow of information between governments, associations and the public. "Whatever flow does exist is largely due to individual networking and the existence of a national child care community."

6.7 Impact on Provinces

Interviewees were asked to assess how the level of awareness of child care issues and participation in child care programming had changed since CCIF began.

Awareness

The provinces and territories fell into three categories regarding change in level of awareness of child care between 1987 and 1995, according to CCIF staff.

More Aware

Atlantic provinces

Quebec

Ontario

Saskatchewan

B.C.

No Change (Awareness Always High)

Manitoba
Yukon

Less Aware

Alberta
NWT

In general, the political climate (i.e., the priority given to child care) was given as the main reason for changes in both directions in the level of awareness of child care of the provincial/ territorial government. This was thought to be most clear in the cases of Ontario, Alberta and B.C.. In Ontario, the NDP government's pro-child care stance was credited for the entire increment in the improvement in awareness. In Alberta, "child care is not a priority. They are not interested in being partners." In B.C., the government "is much more concerned (than in 1987) and have given child care a priority."

CCIF staff ascribed some credit to CCIF for the improvement in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and B.C. The program's impact on Quebec was said to be restricted to the child care community in the province. "There was no impact on the provincial government itself."

Change in Participation

In general, those provinces in which awareness had increased were thought to have increased participation in child care since 1988; "this flows from the increased awareness." Similarly, where awareness had decreased, participation fell.

In one case where awareness was unchanged, the province -- Manitoba -- had to pull back a little because of a reduced budget. As for the Yukon, it was not clear whether participation had changed.

For the most part, provincial objectives have not changed since 1988. What has changed is the budget dedicated to child care, and with that the emphasis on certain target groups and types of care. In two provinces, Ontario and B.C., the budget has

risen substantially since 1988 and services have expanded accordingly (e.g., more subsidized spaces). In Manitoba and Alberta, child care expenditures have been reduced, shifting resources more toward low income families. "Therefore, a lot of people dropped out of licensed care." Also in Manitoba, the emphasis has changed over the past couple of years to meet the demands of those in shift work, especially single parents.

The perceived impact of CCIF on provincial activities varied by province, but overall the provinces regarded it as modest. One said there was "very little" impact. Another stated that CCIF had no direct impact, but "enhanced some of the things the department wanted to do." Another lauded the innovation stimulated by the funding. Finally, one provincial representative said that CCIF had helped a lot in its early years, but with funding cutbacks the impact may even be negative since the province has insufficient finances to fund any projects that CCIF might prove worthy, and the province would have to deal with the "fallout."

For those organizations funded by CCIF for a project or other activities, a typical perceived impact was "Without CCIF dollars, our activities would not have been possible. Therefore, CCIF was entirely responsible for this project's existence." In turn, CCIF was given credit for the impact the project may have had; for example, heightened awareness, providing support services to the community. Those NGOs in an information sharing relationship gave CCIF credit for improving networking and information sharing. "The CCIF provided a broad base of support . . . by enabling the project's staff to connect nationally with others associated with the child care field."

6.8 Impact on Stock of Research

Commenting on CCIF's effects on child care research, interviewees opined that "only the surface has been scratched." Administrative data showed that there were only 26 projects¹⁶ (5% of all projects) considered research according to "project type." And these

¹⁶

Other codes on the administrative system showed that 53 projects involved some research.

few projects covered a wide range of subjects including school-aged care, health care in child care centres, parental preferences, child care worker views, infant care, employer supported care, learning disabilities in centres, evaluations of child care models, aboriginal care, and minority child care. Among the kinds of projects undertaken under the rubric of research were surveys, secondary analysis of survey data, evaluations, feasibility studies, model testing, literature reviews, symposia, and information networks.

Asked what child care issues research projects were designed to address, respondents answered availability of child care (47%), quality of child care (42%), caregiver training (38%), general demand for care (36%), needs assessments (34%), flexible models (31%) and other issues as listed in Table 6.4. The typical research project investigated 3.9 of the child care issues listed in the table, perhaps an indication that many of these issues are interconnected.

Table 6.4 Child Care Issues Addressed by Research Projects

Child Care Issue	Number	Percent
Quality of child care	42	42.4%
Availability of child care	46	46.5
General demand for care	36	36.4
Impacts of child care programs	17	17.2
Rural child care	17	17.2
Flexible child care models	31	31.3
Special needs/disabilities	27	27.3
Minority culture issues	23	23.2
Aboriginal/Inuit issues	17	17.2
Caregiver training	38	38.4
Caregiver working conditions	20	20.2
Project evaluation	22	22.2
Needs assessments	33	33.7
Other	22	24.2

Source: Survey of Project Sponsors

N=99

Only in the area of needs assessments/feasibility studies was there enough done, averred CCIF staff. These studies provided a clear picture of what was needed and have been valuable, but CCIF believes there is no more need for them. Other areas of research were neglected. For example, CCIF had just begun funding research into school-based programs. "There was not a lot of research because groups that could have done the research either didn't know about CCIF or weren't interested." It took a while to get proposals for research projects and when good proposals started coming in the program did not have the money to fund them. Moreover, the review of research proposals was more strict than that for other project types; there was a committee of reviewers. "Quite a few were turned down. Normally, the review of proposals was not consistent."

In response to the question about the area of activity in which CCIF had the least impact, all but one CCIF interviewee said research/evaluation, essentially because not enough was done. "This was due to the most money being available at the beginning of the program when not enough people were ready to come on board."

Thus, research projects did little to increase knowledge regarding quality child care, in general. CCIF staff maintained that there were certain specific areas where research had added to knowledge, however. Now more is known about parental preferences and conditions under which preferences occur. More is also known about where the disparities are between what parents desire and what they get. And knowledge has increased about what it means to provide culturally appropriate care especially incorporating language and traditions. This is particularly the case for aboriginals. Applied projects have built on each other (e.g., Meadow Lake and Cambrian College). The knowledge was the basis for the MicMac council developing their training program. The Meadow Lake model has been taken up by other community/college partnerships. Peer reviewers gave four of the five research projects reviewed very high marks for contributions to the field.

According to CCIF informants, findings have been useful to planners and policy makers. They have also been helpful to health and child welfare agencies in understanding how a positive child care experience can be an effective intervention. The findings have been

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useful to governments and providers. For example, the program funded a couple of projects dealing with infectious illness and health in day care centres done by the pediatric society. The information was well received by the community and contributes to the overall improvement in quality.

6.9 Strengths and Weaknesses of CCIF

Strengths

CCIF staff identified many strengths of their program. Mentioned most often was the program's flexibility. "One of the main strengths was the program's flexibility to meet the needs of communities; it allowed those communities to come up with their responses to problems they had identified." In the beginning the CCIF did not set up a rule book, rather it sought to develop "best practices" by developing case studies. There was no academic/bureaucratic plan so the program could work with ideas in communities to turn them into activities that enhanced knowledge of quality. "Ideas came from the grass roots." Because of its openness there was no bias against any groups and it allowed the information sector to strengthen.

CCIF's spur to innovation was also lauded by staff. CCIF allowed "thousands of flowers to bloom."

Another important contribution was its building of a child care infrastructure. "The program was very strong in providing networking opportunities for various groups. All now see they're not working in isolation." According to staff, CCIF was the only source of connection among child care communities across Canada. It had the capacity to deal directly with the sector (rather than government to government) and was able to put the money directly into the organizations.

As well, CCIF allowed child care to grow and the child care profession to be elevated. "CCIF has supported the development of a vigorous, professional child care field through funding good research and providing good networking."

Case study projects developing child care centres were unanimous in their conviction that CCIF's most important contribution was the funding. Without it, according to all representatives of these projects, their service would never have eventuated and their under-served community would have had to continue without a child care centre. The projects offering information services (CCC-NS, SpecialLink, Westcoast) tended to take a broader view (i.e., beyond their own project) of CCIF's contributions. One respondent put

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it in a nutshell: CCIF succeeded in funding innovative projects, expanding the horizons of child care practitioners, facilitating the expansion of a child care network and encouraging pure research in the child care field. She added, however, that this must be tempered by the understanding that these elements represent small pockets of impact in various parts of the country, as opposed to a major impact on child care in the country as a whole.

Other strengths mentioned by CCIF staff:

- It helped to create a needed body of knowledge by funding Canadian research on child care.
- The program has been able to contribute to the betterment of child care and helped in the recognition of where the needs are.
- It gave a boost to the aboriginal community by providing culturally appropriate settings and resources.

The main strengths identified by the provinces and NGOs were the funding of innovative and experimental projects; the "knowledgeable," "helpful," "committed" and "determined" staff of CCIF; development of new information on child care that helped raise awareness; the cooperative relationship forged between federal and provincial officials; the account taken of provincial priorities in funding decisions; the national profile it brought to child care; the focus on Aboriginals/First Nations; the program's broad mandate and flexibility; its significant positive impact on the child care community; and its positive impact on the quality of care for children.

There was little agreement among CCIF staff on which area of activity was affected most by the program. Four opined that enhanced information services were most affected "because every project produces information which is disseminated formally or informally." "There are a number of publications and texts that are being used. This is a key area in which CCIF was most effective." Four more said development (especially training) projects since the program was most active in these areas. Another person thought CCIF had the greatest impact in demonstration projects "because they provided a good demonstration to parents and the community that child care was required. Before, the concept was not always supported by the whole community." And one

person judged that CCIF had the greatest impact in research. "This is very expensive and universities never have enough money. When CCIF first started, there was very little Canadian research."

Weaknesses

The most frequently identified weakness by CCIF staff was that the program was reactive. The primary implication mentioned was that it did not plan well. "There was no real plan -- some things worked and some didn't and there was no structured way to assess which was which." Several asserted that there should have been more thought about where the program was going. The program "should have stepped back (periodically) to analyze and put things in perspective." In part due to this, "Many projects did not justify the expense."

Two CCIF staff opined that the biggest weakness was that there was insufficient lead time to get the program off the ground. One stated that the focus was on spending the money and as a result mistakes were made and value for money was not always what it could have been. The other asserted "One can't throw money into a program without preparatory work. The field wasn't ready and they weren't given enough lead time."

NGO and provincial officials enumerated a different set of weaknesses of CCIF:

- There was a distinct lack of control of funded projects. CCIF often seemed to spend too much money on some initiatives. "Too often the money is passed on without insisting on some firm measure of accountability on the part of the projects themselves." Moreover, there was a lack of sufficient accountability regarding results.
- It was not part of a larger strategy so small projects were left hanging.
- Dissemination of information was poor. Information concentrated too heavily on who and what project received funding rather than what was learned from the project.
- CCIF was too dispersed, not focused enough. They tried to do "too much with too little"; resources were inadequate to meet all the needs.
- There was no analysis of what was learned from the projects.

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- It placed demands on provinces to provide continued funding once federal resources were depleted.
- Cited by many NGOs (but no provinces) was the short-term nature of the program. The "lifespan of seven years was far too short for its objectives." Related to this, "there was no ongoing financial mechanism in place for continuing projects, programs, and the CCIF itself once the funding term expired." Also, NGOs decried the three-year limit on projects as insufficient.
- Two NGO representatives disapproved of the lack of capital funds, which were "greatly needed."
- CCIF never attempted to fix bad projects.
- Problems took too long to resolve in the early years.
- Sometimes CCIF consultants lacked appropriate expertise or knowledge in child care.

6.10 Conclusion

The various lines of evidence indicate that CCIF has been successful in boosting the quality of child care in Canada, albeit indirectly. It has also been effective in increasing awareness of available resources.

On the other hand, CCIF was said to have had little impact in improving availability/ ccessibility of child care, but then this was not part of its direct mandate. Furthermore, it only "scratched the surface" in augmenting the stock of research into child care, having funded only two or three dozen research projects. Several of these studies have made a positive contribution to knowledge about some facets of child care in Canada, but there remains much to explore.

Findings were more equivocal in the areas of impact on child care infrastructure and new models of service. On the former, it seems fair to conclude that CCIF activities have helped to create and sustain child care organizations, to build a network of agencies and individuals involved in child care, to increase community awareness, to increase sharing of ideas and information, and to enhance the professionalism for child care staff. If infrastructure is considered to be development of specialized services, on-going

financing, and staffing or consolidation of services in child care, the impact of CCIF has been modest. As for models of service, the evidence available does not permit us to reconcile the two opposing viewpoints: "this was CCIF's forte," versus a lot was attempted but little of lasting relevance eventuated.

The most cited strengths and weaknesses of the program may be construed as opposite sides of the same coin. CCIF's flexibility allowed it to cast its net as wide as possible in search of ways to improve child care in Canada. But the lack of policy direction impaired its ability to identify and focus on the areas most in need of improvement.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CCIF OPERATIONS

This chapter will examine how well CCIF did at various administrative tasks associated with the program. It begins with a look at the project selection process. Then there is an assessment of how and how well project results were disseminated to the child care community. Next it discusses the potential for duplication of effort. Then it studies monitoring by staff of the projects. Finally, the role of the Child Care Information Centre is considered.

7.1 Project Selection Process

The program received both solicited and unsolicited proposals. Early in the program when the study of child care was in its infancy, the majority of proposals were not solicited. CCIF was very active in the first couple of years promoting themselves. Staff went to conferences, consulted with the provinces and existing groups, telling them CCIF was available and its terms and conditions. The needs came from the communities and CCIF responded. Communities lacked services and most proposals were easy to fund because most met CCIF's mandate and because there was nothing to compare them with. In the middle years of CCIF, little initiation was needed -- people came forward and CCIF helped them put their ideas into a proposal. In the last three years consultants would solicit proposals because they knew specific areas in which work needed to be done. Consultants would approach certain organizations based on their knowledge of the organization and its work and track record.

Virtually all CCIF staff said the same thing about the adequacy of resources: There was enough, or maybe even too much money in the early years but not enough in the last years. "In the first year, \$8-13 million were allocated and it was not possible to spend that amount in the first year of a program -- time is needed to set priorities. Faced with this, programs either lapse the money or spend it inappropriately." The program was

slow to take off and had the most money in the middle years. A few CCIF consultants claimed that there was too much money in the early years: "In the early days resources were spent on things that were not needed not knowing any better. Many Cadillac projects were funded." Another person said early "projects were funded too generously." But by the last couple of years, after a series of funding cuts, there were not enough funds to address all priorities. For example, research and training projects, both of which require large budgets, were not adequately covered in the last 4 years.

According to CCIF interviewees, in the last years of the program about 70%-80% of the proposals were declined, the primary reason being lack of funding. The CIS computer system included only 48 rejected cases, translating into an 8.5% refusal rate. But, many project ideas were declined at the conceptual stage, before a serious proposal was written.

Besides designating priority areas related to the child care needs of families in unusual circumstances or in under-served areas, CCIF did little or nothing to identify knowledge gaps or service needs and direct funding to those areas. According to CCIF staff, there was no concerted effort to address one priority more than another. CCIF always did a mix of types of projects. "There were no allocations to priorities -- CCIF was reactive." Activity areas depended on provincial and community needs. For example, funding for research projects accounted for a larger proportion of CCIF activity in Québec (27%) than elsewhere because of the provincial government's mandate and insistence on research. Ontario was ready to invest in child care, therefore 44% of development projects were done in that province. Also 27% of demonstration projects were conducted by Aboriginals in part because of the need for child care services on reserves.

Formal priorities did not change from the program's inception. Some priority groups such as special needs, aboriginal and minorities received a lot of attention, but there was no systematic attempt to assess the efforts and change direction. A lot depended on what proposals were received. Only in the last two years did the program take note of areas that hadn't been funded very much such as rural care and school-aged care, and begin to focus on them.

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Different activities were emphasized as the program evolved, however. In the early stages, a lot of needs assessments were done because not much was known about local needs. Starting in 1992 or 1993, the program decided to end funding of needs assessments and feasibility studies.

From the start, the program was concerned that demonstration projects had built in a plan to continue funding after CCIF involvement had ended. The program wanted to make sure no "orphans" were created, projects that would not be funded from another source after CCIF funding ended. Three or four years into the program it became clear that demonstration projects were getting into trouble with the provinces because the projects were putting pressure on the provinces to pick up funding after CCIF funding expired. By 1993 CCIF ended demonstration projects. --

The focus shifted more to research, information regarding training (manuals, training tools), facilitating networking and information exchange. Priority was given to policy and program issues -- enhanced information, quality resource material, ability to transfer results, and the ability to enhance the work of earlier projects. To some extent, priority was given to underfunded geographic areas, and near the end of the program projects with smaller budgets or co-funded budgets.

All CCIF personnel interviewed believed the program had targeted the right groups. Many also felt that there was more work to do with some of these groups. Because CCIF did not attach priorities to the designated groups, some groups received scant attention -- not much headway was made with farm families or minorities, especially immigrants -- and others got a disproportionate share of attention -- aboriginals and children with special needs.

Moreover, according to CCIF staff, the impact of CCIF was much greater in some provinces than in others (e.g., Ontario had a sophisticated system which CCIF took to a higher level while in the Atlantic region there was nothing and CCIF seeded activities). "CCIF was a test fund and by design tried to generate ideas for testing/development based on the capacity of the provinces." The provinces with more capacity got more funding.

There was a wide range in the amount of time it took to approve proposals. For the case study projects, the shortest was two months, the longest two years. On average, it took 11 months from the submission of the original proposal to project approval. The ones that took the least time tended to be follow-up projects. The lengthy process of approval caused frustration for some organizations. "Project staff began to think they would never get an answer." One project came close to losing the space it had secured for the project and said community interest waned with the lengthy delay. Some respondents mentioned that it was understood that typically a considerable amount of time was involved in a proposal process; these individuals seemed satisfied with the time it took. Still, as one interviewee put it "18 months seemed somewhat extreme."

7.2 Information Dissemination

On the whole, projects were responsible for dissemination of their results. Dissemination plans were incorporated in the proposals "but they were often weak." For "some projects it was hard to get them to do more than submit six copies of the final report. Most projects were good at sharing information on a one-to-one basis."

Some consultants tried to improve on dissemination plans at the proposal stage. Alternatively, consultants could amend the budget to allow for broader dissemination of particularly exciting results or could take on the responsibility of dissemination. This depended on the ability of the organization to do it themselves.

There was disagreement about whether the strategy of putting the onus on the project to diffuse information was appropriate. Some thought it was since CCIF did not have the money or the resources to disseminate end products. Requests for information can go directly to the project. Others felt that dissemination plans should not be built into proposals because it is often hard to tell the merits of the final product at the beginning of the project. "Therefore it is not necessarily appropriate to budget large amounts for dissemination of the final report." One person suggested making a publication contribution to worthwhile products so that CCIF could take control and decide what should be disseminated to a larger audience.

Dissemination beyond that done by the projects was usually undertaken by the Information Centre as well as The Canadian Child Care Federation. The method varied depending on the final product: e.g., for a manual developed by the pediatric association there is a huge demand, but for small locally based projects there is not a great demand for their products. Projects were shown in the catalogue but the Federation also put out a manual (funded by CCIF) which described the final products by province. The CCIF synopsis of projects was sent across the country to libraries, NGOs, provincial governments and research institutes. Other methods of dissemination included:

- supporting the creation of parent resource centres which reach out to parents;
- information services provided by the Information Centre (which existed before CCIF);
- "poster sessions" at CCIF conferences at which end products were displayed. (CCIF put together information brochures on the kinds of projects that had been funded -- there was much demand for these brochures); and
- bringing organizations together and enabling small groups of child care professionals to come under one umbrella and respond to requests for information.

For the most part, NGO respondents said that the information received from CCIF was generally good, current, valid, timely, and helpful. It turns out, however, that most were commenting on quick responses to their requests for specific information from CCIF. When considering dissemination of project results, the story was different. Only if one just happened to hear about a project and then request the document/product, would one ever get the information, according to one NGO. "There is definitely a need for some kind of strategic communications strategy." One province agreed, complaining that they had not been given very much information at all: They got no final reports unless they asked. "In a lot of cases it was just hit and miss." This representative speculated that for lots of projects there is no final report.

Other provinces had quite different reckonings of CCIF performance with regard to information sharing. Two provinces were pleased all along with the information they had received from CCIF. "The CCIF provided us with a number of valuable documents/reports. It has formed an important base of information." One province said that only

recently was there a reliable flow of information regarding certain projects and activities both from within and outside the province. Another thought that the performance of CCIF started off well but degraded in more recent years.

No case study project representative knew of any direct dissemination of their products by CCIF, but then none expected this. Project personnel claimed to be satisfied with CCIF's help in disseminating information; those included in CCIF conferences were especially appreciative.

In the survey we asked whether and how CCIF end products were distributed. Table 7.1 displays the responses.

Demonstration Projects

The most popular means of disseminating findings was through workshops or seminars. Conferences were also used by over half the projects. Nearly one quarter claimed that their findings had been published in specialized journals such as Infoparents and Canadian Parents. But few of the respondents specified the journal and some who did named a newsletter or booklet. "Specialized journal" apparently means different things to different people. About one in eight demonstration projects never disseminated their results (though some of these had just submitted their results for publication). Nearly 23% of respondents did not know whether CCIF disseminated information about their demonstration project. Of those who did, most thought CCIF was very (22%) or somewhat helpful (42%) in disseminating results. But 20% said CCIF was of very little help and 16% said it was no help at all.

Development Projects

As with demonstration projects, the most popular means of disseminating findings was through workshops or seminars. Conferences were a close second. One-third contended that their findings had been published in specialized journals such as Focus Canadian Children; but again, many did not specify the journal and some of the publications specified did not seem to be a journal. Only 15% of respondents did not

know whether CCIF disseminated information about their demonstration project. Of those who did, most thought CCIF was very (30%) or somewhat helpful (36%) in disseminating results. But 20% said CCIF was of very little help and 15% said it was no help at all.

Research Projects

About one quarter of the research projects were published in specialized journals such as *Focus*, the *Canadian Journal of Health* and the *Canadian Journal of Research in ECE*, boosting potential application of the results, and showing that the quality was high enough to meet publication standards. The percentage of research projects so published may be overestimated, however, since few of the respondents specified the journal and some who did named a newsletter or booklet. Most of the other projects used pamphlets, conferences or workshops to circulate their findings. Nine in ten maintained that the research findings are available to people wishing to obtain them. Among the sources:

<u>Source</u>	<u>% of Projects</u>
Project sponsor	68.8%
Public library	15.1
Educational institution	29.0
Federal government library	23.7
Government book stores	4.3
Public book stores	2.2
Child care organization	40.9
Other source#	14.0

N=93

* E.g., Youth organization, CCIF, resource centre

There was some negative sentiment about how helpful CCIF was in disseminating project results. Of those who knew about CCIF's role in dissemination (19% said they did not know), 16% asserted that CCIF was not at all helpful, and 16% said CCIF was of very little help. Still, most felt that CCIF was somewhat (39%) or very (30%) helpful in this regard.

Enhanced Information Services

These projects used 1.5 methods on average to distribute their information. Most often used were publishing for general use and workshops/seminars. Only 18% of respondents did not know whether CCIF disseminated information about their information enhancement project. Of those who did, a high proportion thought that CCIF did not do enough: over one-fifth asserted that CCIF was of no help at all in disseminating their information; a further 14% said CCIF was of very little help. On the other hand 31% felt CCIF helped a great deal, and 34% said they helped somewhat.

Table 7.1 Dissemination of CCIF Project End Products

Means of Dissemination	Development	Demonstration	Research	Enhanced Info
Published in specialized journal	33.3%	23.3%	23.8%	28.6%
Published for general use	43.3	38.3	56.4	57.1
Presented at conference(s)	60.0	54.2	57.4	44.3
Presented at workshop/seminar	67.8	62.7	52.5	60.0
Other means*	24.4	15.3	23.8	27.1
Project not yet completed	2.2	3.4	2.0	1.4
Findings not disseminated	2.2	11.9	8.1	2.9
N	90	60	101	70

* E.g., Newsletters, addresses, kits, distribution company, manuals.

Source: Survey of Project Sponsors

As further input to the question of dissemination of CCIF products, we asked respondents whether or not they had used products developed by other CCIF projects. Almost two-thirds said yes. Of those who had used other CCIF products, 67% found the products very useful, and 32% found them useful.

7.3 Duplication of Projects

Because project results are usually not widely disseminated, the potential for duplication is heightened. Evidence of duplication is equivocal. The provincial and NGO representatives were unaware of any duplication. Only four stated that there was none; others thought there probably was, but they knew of no instances. Most case study project representatives (7 of the 12) knew of no other CCIF projects in their community. The others maintained that their project did not duplicate previous project(s) they knew of in the community.

Within CCIF there were two different responses to this issue. One group asserted that there was no duplication of information because the projects had to prove they were producing new information. "There (may) have been some similar products, . . . but there will be something (in each) that is unique to the region."

The more common view was that there was probably duplication of information. For one thing, most provincial project reports were not translated so some people could not read them. "There could have been some duplication of information between different provinces." For another, there appeared to be no mechanism in place within CCIF to check for duplication. Instead, the program relied on the provinces, "who could point out if a project had been done before."

Only one example of duplication of information was given by interviewees. The report produced by the Child Care Federation is somewhat like a status of child care which duplicates a document put out in-house. "However, this doesn't often happen and steps have been taken to rationalize such activities." Another informant said that feasibility studies got to a point where they were "reinventing the wheel," an important reason to stop funding such projects.

More serious evidence of duplication comes from the peer reviewers. They said the Hub Model and the Workplace Day Care projects were concerned with developing child care models that had already been studied and written about. Consequently neither of these projects was judged to have added much to the existing stock of knowledge. We regard this as significant evidence since only 10 projects were subject to peer reviews (and recall that these projects were nominated as excellent by CCIF staff) -- i.e., 20% of the projects reviewed were said to have duplicated existing work. This does not mean that 20% of all CCIF projects duplicated previous work, but it raises the possibility that the incidence of duplication was not trivial.

7.4 Monitoring

Following approval of the proposal, the CCIF consultant monitored the project by making on-site visits, by reviewing progress reports and by frequent phone contacts. Projects were also asked to submit a critical path on a quarterly basis by which means any slippage could be identified and sorted out in meetings. At the end of a project, the consultant closed the file after ensuring that the appropriate number of copies of the end product had been received and circulated as planned.

As one interviewee said and several others implied, "Monitoring was very lax." This may have been the case for many projects, but not for the ones viewed as consequential by CCIF consultants. Case study projects appear to have been well monitored. Every representative of case study projects asserted that they were satisfied -- most said "very" or "extremely" satisfied -- with the consultation process during CCIF's involvement. They appreciated that CCIF staff were not "breathing down their necks", but were approachable and helpful when needed. "Everything was done to accommodate the project's needs." CCIF staff were said to be accessible, helpful and supportive.

Most case study projects submitted quarterly reports. Contact with the CCIF consultant for some projects was monthly, at least in the early stages of the project. Other projects were in contact on an "as needed" basis. Reasons for contact ranged from help with preparing reports to invitations to attend workshops. "CCIF would provide advice for making the program better." They regularly requested financial information from the projects. CCIF consultants visited most of the sites, usually more than once. Some even visited before the project got under way.

They had a handful of suggestions for improving CCIF's involvement in a project:

- It would be useful to have a hands on workshop so that projects could better understand reporting requirements to CCIF.
- It would be helpful to bring similar projects together early in the process to jointly work out and share solutions to common problems (mentioned twice).
- CCIF should hold an annual meeting with all CCIF project coordinators so that project information could be shared.

- During the proposal approval process, a more open process of consultation would have been welcomed -- i.e., prior to having the proposal approved it would have been informative to know how and why the project was being approved.
- CCIF must make sure that it has good people on board.
- Ensure that the same project officer be maintained for the entire duration of the project.
- Ensure that CCIF's internal information service is on-line at the start of a project so that information on other projects could be easily and readily available.
- CCIF's accountability forms could have been less intricate and much simpler.

7.5 Child Care Information Centre

The Information Centre's role was primarily to disseminate information about child care derived from CCIF final products and from other sources. It received copies of all final reports and produced a synopsis of projects. The centre responded to all ministerial queries and consultants responded to the public. It also responded to requests for final reports either by sending a copy (if supply was adequate) or by referring requests to the appropriate source. Centre staff attended conferences and distributed products. The centre, which existed prior to CCIF, worked in collaboration with CCIF.

The Centre played a role that the Child Care Federation was also playing. It was suggested by some CCIF staff that responsibility for information dissemination could be privatized (possibly through the Federation). Private organizations can identify other sources of information as well and can tie in with universities better than CCIF. The Federation would need on-going funding although some of their activities generate revenues.

There was an undercurrent of disappointment in the Information Centre among some CCIF staff. "The Information Centre did not play a major role. . . It was not very active in disseminating products." Another person stated "it could have had a much larger role." The Centre created a number of papers on what CCIF supported. "These are

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good but late and should have been started earlier. A book listing projects was to be compiled each year but only one was completed."

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter identified some problems in CCIF's administration. Most importantly, it confirmed a conclusion from the previous chapter that CCIF did little or nothing to identify knowledge gaps or service needs and direct funding to those areas.

CCIF was given high marks for being responsive to requests for information. Beyond this, however, many informants were critical of CCIF's record of proactive dissemination of project results. For example, over a third of project representatives considered that CCIF had been ineffective in this area. Some interviewees also noted that the only way they would get a report was if they just happened to find out about it and asked for it.

Because there has been no systematic analysis of past projects and because distribution of project results is haphazard, the potential for duplication of effort is high. Moreover, CCIF had no systematic procedures for preventing it (e.g., CCIF staff did not make use of the computer system to prevent duplication). Some evidence of duplication was uncovered: most importantly, 20% of peer review projects were considered to duplicate existing work.

On monitoring, again the message seems to be that CCIF was passive. To be sure, CCIF staff were complimented for the help given to projects: they helped mold the proposals, visited project sites and gave helpful advice when asked. But how good staff were at discovering problems without being asked is open to question. We were told that monitoring was lax.

CHAPTER EIGHT: LOOKING AHEAD

This chapter is intended to help planners of future federal government child care programming. It reports the views of our informants on important issues in the child care field, gaps in child care knowledge, the role of the federal government in addressing these issues and gaps, and suggestions for how to approach these issues and gaps.

8.1 Future Trends and Issues in Child Care

Many CCIF informants were of the opinion that the three main issues of the last decade or more will remain at the top of the list: quality, accessibility and affordability. "The issues haven't changed all that much since 1982."

First in the minds of most provincial and NGO representatives was funding. Many expressed concern with shrinking budgets and what that might mean for the other two touchstones in child care -- quality and availability of appropriate types of care. "Even now the provinces are having a tough time trying to maintain the systems which are currently in place. . . We are going to see a lot of pulling back by the provinces."

Another more recent issue, the need for flexible care, was forecast to grow in importance by all three groups of informants. "The workforce is changing and it will be necessary to provide the services to meet the changing needs." "Caring for children is not going to be from 9 to 5 any more."

Another issue, raised by two CCIF interviewees, was the future role and responsibility of the national government. "With unconditional block transfers what will be the impact when provinces start making decisions based on their philosophy and ideology?" They

had concerns regarding the political will and who will be responsible for child care. "If there is minimal federal involvement the provinces will not be able to do it."

Other future trends and issues in child care listed by CCIF staff, the provinces and/or the NGOs:

- responsiveness to family needs;
- professional training;
- wages and working conditions in child care centres;
- increased public awareness of need;
- changing government roles including deregulation and disagreement among provinces about national standards;
- more private sector involvement across Canada (child care will become part of the small business industry);
- care for specific groups such as infants, school-age children, aboriginals, rural children, disabled children or new immigrants;
- multi-cultural issues;
- more research and evaluation;
- greater emphasis on home care; and
- appropriate recognition of child care workers.

8.2 Gaps in Child Care Knowledge

All informants attested that there are a lot of gaps. CCIF staff said there is a need to do more evaluation of the current services, programs and practices -- whether they are appropriate and cost-effective and whether they meet the need. Research needs to be done regarding the determinants of quality care, standards of care, quality of child care services in disadvantaged areas, school-based care, and in special groups such as infant/toddler care. There needs to be more studies around employer practices, leave, family/work balance, self-employment, non-traditional hours and the impact they will have on child rearing and what services can meet those non-traditional needs. More knowledge is needed regarding comprehensive services and there is a need to know how commercial child care compares with non-profit. Second order questions will also probably be needed e.g., factors affecting preferences by area as well as by age of child.

According to the provinces, the principal area in which more knowledge is needed was said to be "quality." Different provinces emphasized different areas of quality. One province saw a general need for more information on quality, how to obtain it and sustain it. Another was much more specific, arguing that the key issue to explore is what difference does quality child care make to the rearing of children versus care provided by family. A third listed three important issues involving quality: a need to better understand the cost versus quality relationship; a need to take a hard look at reducing costs without eroding quality; and a need to look at whether current regulations are affecting quality.

NGO informants listed many different areas where more knowledge is necessary. Six mentioned multicultural issues -- a need to understand the needs of a community and what is culturally appropriate (especially for Aboriginals). Three thought more work was needed in the area of training and curriculum development. Two called for more research into behavioural problems of children (e.g., fetal alcohol syndrome). No other area was raised by more than one person.

According to the interviewees, there is also a need to study:

- parental preferences and choices;
- the phenomenon of empty spaces across the country;
- different models that are more age appropriate and less costly;
- outcomes for those children who have been part of the child care system;
- home child care models;
- working conditions for child care providers; and
- special needs.

Peer reviewers reported that there were still gaps in the knowledge necessary for improving the quality of child care, although four of the reviewers pointed out that to some extent part of the problem is the failure to apply knowledge already available, not a lack of knowledge. The following gaps were identified: designing effective training programs; defining and measuring quality of care; organization of child care centres; integration of special needs children; relationship between director characteristics and training and quality; and defining "quality of care" in an Aboriginal context.

The primary reason for these gaps according to CCIF and NGO informants was a lack of funding for research. "The program has to focus better -- it tried to do too much with too little and expectations were too high." Also cited by CCIF was a lack of provincial involvement in research or on the topics to study. "Child care is not at the same stage across Canada and the provinces need to be involved before CCIF can enter the fray." Another reason was that, as CCIF officials readily conceded, the staff were not experts on research, on how to properly conduct it, or on what subjects most needed research. There wasn't a research framework. "Generally, there was no long range planning and this needs to be done."

One reason for the gaps according to two provincial officials is that results of studies that have been done are not generally available for everyone to see. Another attributed the gaps to the low priority given to children and their developmental needs. A third ascribed the gaps to a biased viewpoint on the part of the child care community. The child care field has a "certain idea and . . . a vested interest in things being a certain way. (They believe) licensed care is the only way to go." This leads them to ignore other possibilities.

CCIF staff had some suggestions to address the problems. It is necessary to pick the "best of breed" of the research conducted and make it known. It is necessary to look at the existing models and see what can be adapted. This research needs to be done on a national level. A new program would look for an advisory body of professionals, academics, etc who would identify areas in which projects should be funded.

8.3 Role of Federal Government in Future Trends and Issues

Roles envisaged by CCIF staff ranged from a call to take a lead role in setting standards for child care to funding expansion of the licensed system (i.e., subsidize child care spaces). The latter view was prevalent: "The federal government should show that child care is a priority and should be willing to invest resources to start the process of increasing spaces and evaluating the cost of services."

Another common suggestion was to play a leadership role in the area of child care research. The emphasis seemed to be on applied research at a national level. "The federal government is in a unique position to help find some answers; to experiment with flexible, comprehensive models of care; to evaluate current services and see whether they meet the needs of parents (via) R&D at the national level." Most provinces also thought that the focus should be on research to inform future public policy.

Two CCIF staff felt that the federal government had a valuable role to play in promotion and information/education. "The federal role (is that of) information broker . . . with a little support to infrastructure in the field through on-going funding of child care associations. "

As well, two CCIF officials held that training is one of the central issues. One declared that a new program has a role in helping to develop guides after finding out what is needed through research. The other said the federal government can contribute to the cost of training staff through the purchase of training seats.

It was also asserted that the federal government has to stay in child care for First Nations and Inuit "because there is nowhere else for them to go" especially for subsidized spaces for residents of reserves.

Virtually all NGO interviewees said funding is the proper role of a program like CCIF. "Their role is to fund the field so that they can address the issues." "This is the cornerstone and it is crucial." Secondary roles include sharing and distributing information, lobbying to convince government that these are important issues, providing national leadership, playing a brokering role with the provinces, supporting research, and consulting with experts in the field about key needs and contracting with knowledgeable people to study them.

Survey respondents were asked to rank in order of importance, seven potentially important child care issues for federal government activity. Table 8.1 shows the results. Ranked most important on average was improving the quality of child care. Nearly 28% of respondents ranked this issue first, and 80% ranked it among the top three. A distant

second in average ranking was increasing the availability of child care programs (child care programming is not within federal jurisdiction).

Respondents were also invited to write in particular areas that they thought the federal government should not be involved in. About 12% did so, but they were hardly of one mind concerning areas to be avoided by the federal government. Only one area was mentioned by more than three respondents: regulation of standards was mentioned six times.

Respondents were also asked whether CCIF was the best mechanism by which the issues and needs of promoting quality child care may be addressed. Three-quarters said yes. Most of those who said no thought that professional organizations would have been superior.

Table 8.1 Ranking Important Child Care Issues

Child Care Issue	% Ranking Issue Most Important	Average Rank (1=most important)
Increasing research into child care issues	18.0%	4.05
Increasing availability of child care programs	20.3	3.28
Increasing availability of child care spaces	21.8	3.59
Improving quality of child care	27.8	2.63
Increasing awareness of child care issues	3.0	4.40
Raising qualifications of staff	0.8	4.62
Increasing information sharing	3.8	5.31
Other ^a	4.5	3.13

^a Most often mentioned was some aspect of building the child care infrastructure.

Source: Survey of Project Sponsors

N=133 (the rest skipped the question)

8.4 Adequacy of CCIF Approach

A virtual consensus -- only one person disagreed, the rest were reading from the same script¹⁷ -- amongst CCIF staff may be stated as follows: CCIF played a necessary and valuable role during its seven year mandate. But it is now time to move on. CCIF must build on the experience they have amassed. Because there is much less money, the program has to be more strategic and needs to be better at consultation with the field. CCIF responded to what came in; a new program should be more proactive and more focused on research. Target areas should be determined after a review of what has been achieved and where the gaps are. The program should completely back away from needs assessment and feasibility studies. The people administering the program would need to have new skills (i.e., research skills).

Every provincial official and some NGO representatives interviewed concurred that CCIF needs to be much more directive and focused -- government has to have an overall direction for child care. "It needs to decide what it wants in conjunction with the provinces." It has tended to "spread itself too thin" in the past. Most NGO respondents considered the CCIF approach to have been adequate.

8.5 Integration of CCIF Activities with Other Programs

CCIF staff mentioned several programs into which CCIF activities could be integrated. Some said that CCIF activities may be consolidated within a new R&D program. "If there is a consolidated R&D program, then linkages between child care and other issues might be stronger. (The disadvantage is) that child care might get squeezed for funds."

Many CCIF interviewees thought in terms of what specific components of CCIF might be housed in other programs. Three thought that universities could take over the research component, although they worried that universities "would not have the national picture so it would still need (overarching) coordination of research." Three others thought that R&D could be handled through the National Welfare Grants. Another popular idea was to farm out information dissemination to the Child Care Federation. Their work parallels

¹⁷ Several used the exact same words.

that of the Child Care Information Centre. One consultant thought that regional agencies could do information sharing.

Provincial interviewees were vague in their response. No other organization was specified that could take responsibility for any CCIF activity. And no government program was named that could integrate any CCIF activity. Provincial officials tended to think that some aspects -- information dissemination was mentioned -- could be handled by the private sector. Interestingly, none said their province would take up any of the slack.

Most NGO respondents saw no reason why CCIF activities could not be integrated into other programs. Some thought the activities could be undertaken by other branches of the federal government: Headstart and the Brighter Futures program were given as examples. One person said provincial governments could assume some of the responsibilities by modeling their services after the CCIF design. One mused that "an excellent way of operating a fund granting body for child care would be as a foundation" based around an organization with a history in children and youth services. It would need public funding, however.

Regardless of what agencies might take over components of CCIF, CCIF and NGO informants advanced two central considerations. Most warned that the child care focus should not be diluted in any new program. And many cautioned that national funding should be continued to ensure a national focus and to help shape the child care agenda. "Any contribution program could probably be integrated with CCIF but you would probably lose the child care focus. . . It would become a fight for funding. If the program is going to be integrated into anything, it will be necessary to look at all the programs and have a bigger picture."

8.6 Alternatives for Addressing Child Care Issues

A few ideas were advanced by CCIF staff as alternatives for addressing quality child care. Four brought up the concept of community-based, integrated family services.

Two provinces agreed that this concept had promise. "A community-based approach may be cheaper and more effective. (The advantages of this approach include) more efficiency, less expense because of cost-sharing and it may encourage people to access available services. However, this approach needs cooperation between all organizations who may be afraid to lose turf. . . It also needs the cooperation of the province." The federal government would have an indirect role in such a model since service delivery is a provincial responsibility. Services have to be community-based so the role of the federal government is funding and providing some national guidelines. "It is also necessary to support the strengthening of professional resources in communities so they themselves can provide advice and guidance. It is essential to do things in a systematic way at the regional level."

The notion that the federal government cannot directly affect quality because it does not deliver programs was also common to many responses. "It would be asking too much if one wants quality care without funding for direct service." Referring to the proposed R&D program, one CCIF consultant said "R&D funds can be informative but can't directly affect quality. Maybe if the new program is more targeted, direct links could be made to quality."

Another idea was for the federal government to set national standards for quality. "If the federal government would take the lead role in developing national standards for quality, education and training, then Canada would have a comprehensive child care system." Similarly, one provincial official suggested implementation of a national child care strategy to provide a coordinated and consolidated approach to child care.

A final idea advanced by CCIF staff was to work out a consortium with private organizations to approach provincial governments to contribute to a national fund that may be administered by an organization. "This is not unrealistic but there would have to be a willingness by governments to be involved. Provinces don't want any part of anything that would increase demand that they would have to support." This approach would result in cost savings to the federal government.

Another interesting suggestion from a provincial official was that CCIF could operate more effectively if it worked in a more committee-like format in directing the flow of funds into child care across the country. Incorporating the expertise and work of researchers and experts in its funding process, this more structured approach would permit more significant long term regional planning to take place and prevent projects from being done pell-mell.

NGO representatives had few insights into alternatives to improving child care. Most are fully invested in the idea that government, particularly the federal government, is the only route to increased quality. (This is not to cast aspersions on this point of view, but the question was meant to elicit other alternatives.) Hence, their suggestions for more public funding, universal child care, or a national child care policy, all of which entail an expanded public role in child care. The only ideas beyond the public realm (each raised once) were an expansion of support from the corporate sector to mount an awareness campaign, increase parenting skills programs, and community planning.

There was little commonality among case study respondents regarding alternate ways to address the issues and needs of quality child care. Two thought that there should be a national child care system. Two others called for more cooperation and funding from all levels of government to better coordinate existing services. And two suggested investment in infrastructure (e.g., a child care network coast to coast). Otherwise, no suggestion was made more than once.

8.7 Suggestions for Successor Program

All interviewees and case study project representatives were strongly in favour of a successor program. Most often recommended was that the program should be more proactive and more focused. Among the suggestions for appropriate issues to target -- training curricula, research, flexible models, information sharing, conferences, and building infrastructure.

According to CCIF staff, there should also be more lead time and there must be strategic planning over the next three years.

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Also recommended for a successor program:

- ☐ There is a need to do more analysis of what was learned from CCIF projects to determine where to go next.
- ☐ It has to continue to support the national infrastructure.
- ☐ It needs an aboriginal group to advise it on decisions regarding R&D for aboriginals.
- ☐ It should give the community a chance to decide what it wants to know and how it wants to be organized. Decisions made in concert with the field would create better partnerships with the field and a greater sense of ownership.
- ☐ CCIF should take more time to ensure the quality of the projects it funds and to more closely follow the outcomes of its projects.
- ☐ There needs to be more research focused on a national perspective.
- ☐ Keep the CCIF staff in the new program.
- ☐ Continue to consult the provinces on their priorities.
- ☐ Have a national advisory body to review proposals (not the child care community).
- ☐ It is important that there be face-to-face meetings between project staff and the funding agency early in the project. Such meetings are helpful in overcoming hesitancy to get in touch with the funder.
- ☐ A new program should focus on creating options for parents and should provide ongoing funding.
- ☐ Any new child care program must include provisions for support to the infrastructure and it must "have good people on board" who can effectively monitor and run it. Partnerships at all levels, from local to national, need to be struck."
- ☐ Projects should have access to a fund for more than one year.
- ☐ Projects should be allowed to come together to discuss ideas and strategies.
- ☐ Funding should not be pooled into one or two areas, rather it should be directed to exploring innovative models of delivering services.

The peer reviewers were asked to identify research topics in the field of child care government should fund. Altogether they made 30 recommendations which fell into 14 separate categories. Presented below is the list of research topics generated; in parentheses is the number of times the topic was identified: quality of child care (6); training and staffing (4); effects of child care on child development (4); community, family, work and child care (3); innovative child care delivery models (3); profile of Canadian child care (2); child care for children with special needs (1); economics of child care (1); health and safety (1); family day care (1); need for child care and accessibility (1); effects of policies on the availability and quality of care (1); research on family day care, infant care, and school-age care (1); and ways to integrate child care and educational systems (1).

8.8 Conclusion

As CCIF staff pointed out, the federal government should build on the experience amassed by CCIF. A new program should be more proactive and more focused on research. Target areas should be determined after a review of what has been achieved and where the gaps are. This chapter contains a preliminary list of those gaps as suggested by our informants.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION -- RESPONSES TO EVALUATION ISSUES

The primary conclusion deriving from this evaluation is that CCIF was successful in achieving its mandate. It spawned innovative approaches and services in order to improve the quality of child care in Canada. This was evident from the results of the interviews, survey, peer review and case studies. It is important to add, however, that the stability of the infrastructure CCIF created is uncertain: some thought it would crumble if the federal government abandoned the field.

Almost every one of the hundreds of people surveyed or interviewed had high praise for the program, its mission, its people and its accomplishments. This sentiment should be tempered with the knowledge that many of those contacted have a vested interest in the continuation of a program like CCIF; but the virtually unanimous praise the program has evoked is impressive.

CCIF did have some problems, however, mostly related to its operations. There was no concerted effort to determine what areas needed attention most; there was no analysis of past projects to maximize potential learning from the projects funded. CCIF did little or nothing to identify knowledge gaps or service needs and direct funding to those areas. Efforts at disseminating project results were criticized as insufficient by many informants. The potential for duplication was high since there were no systematic means of preventing it, and monitoring was said to be lax (according to some interviewees).

Informants maintained that there is a lot left to accomplish in the area of child care. For this reason they were resolute in their conviction that there continues to be an important role for the federal government to play in the field. A follow-up program, Child Care Visions, has been announced.

The final section summarizes our responses to the specific evaluation questions posed in the Terms of Reference.

9.1 Addressing the Evaluation Questions

Program Rationale

- A1, A2** **Is there still a continuing need for this program considering the present supply versus the public's demand for and use of child care services? Is there a continuing role for the federal government to play in the child care field which is essentially a provincial responsibility? Or, should the culture of partnership and a shared mandate continue to be fostered? What is the extent of need or desirability for federal national leadership and coordination?**

The evidence argues for a demonstrated need for continued federal intervention in child care. The original impetus for the program -- a need for more quality child care -- remains in force; informants asserted that there is a lot left to accomplish in the area. No other program -- federal, provincial or municipal -- duplicates the activities of CCIF, so it is easy to conclude that if the federal government ceases CCIF activities, no other program could fill the gap. Finally, most informants were adamant that a federal withdrawal would be "devastating." The infrastructure built could crumble.

- A3.** **What is the comparative impact in the field of CCIF project funding and its other activities in terms of ability to influence quality change and practices in the child care communities relative to impacts of the other players, such as Provinces, Universities, Colleges, Research Centres, professional associations, etc.? (Are the CCIF dollars just a drop in the bucket, or does CCIF, represent a significant dollar infusion to and impact on the child care sector)?**

Unlike CCIF, provincial governments can have a direct effect on quality. "Provincial governments fund actual services so their decisions have immediate impact." By contrast, CCIF's effect is indirect as discussed previously. CCIF helps provinces improve their services by providing them with information, but most CCIF and provincial interviewees held that the provincial governments had a greater impact on quality than did CCIF.

The feeling among NGO representatives was different though. They thought that, although provincial governments were certainly in the position to have more of an effect on improving quality than CCIF, it was nevertheless CCIF that had actually had a greater impact. The primary reason was that CCIF had money to dedicate to the issue, and most provincial governments did not.

With respect to universities, research centres, and other agencies the consensus among interviewees was that these groups would not have become involved without funding from CCIF. To NGOs and CCIF, this meant that CCIF had a greater effect on quality than did universities, colleges or research centres. They coaxed universities and research centres to do research, and colleges into recognizing the need to concentrate on curriculum development. Before CCIF they were "slow to change." Provinces were more vague, saying that CCIF's impact was indirect, that of other organizations, direct. One province maintained that colleges have had a greater impact than CCIF on quality by providing appropriate training: "This certainly provided more of an impact than isolated projects."

According to CCIF staff, professional associations would not have existed without CCIF. In other words, to the extent they have any impact on quality, CCIF can take much of the credit for it. Most NGOs acknowledged that CCIF deserves a lot of credit concerning the work professional associations do to augment quality. But none was willing to concede that CCIF was the more important party. They seemed to think both were equally important.

- A4. Is CCIF reaching out to the right groups and targeting appropriate activities and areas? Given the multiplicity of its "priorities," is CCIF spreading itself too broadly and therefore too thin to have any deep influence or effect in any one particular area? Should CCIF focus its efforts more narrowly in terms of extent of clientele served and/or activities targeted based on continuing needs?**

Formal priorities did not change from the program's inception. Some priority groups such as special needs and aboriginals received a lot of attention, but there was no

systematic attempt to assess the efforts and change direction. A lot depended on what proposals were received.

The lack of policy direction impaired its ability to identify and focus on the areas most in need of improvement.

A5, A6 Is the CCIF mandate and workplan effectively linked to broader government strategies? To what extent does CCIF complement, supplement, overlap, duplicate, or work at cross purposes with other similar programs/activities? Or does CCIF offer particular support and/or services not available elsewhere?

According to CCIF staff, there were no official or premeditated linkages with other federal child care strategies. Linkages that did exist between CCIF and other programs tended to be informal, consisting mainly of information sharing and referral. When a project did not meet the mandate of CCIF it might be referred to other programs. The consultants would put groups in touch with other programs; some received funding through Indian Affairs, Secretary of State, etc.

Although most CCIF staff believed there was little or no duplication of CCIF activities with those of other federal programs, "this was accidental." That is, linkages were poor, so there was little checking with other programs. But then, no other program had a mandate close to that of CCIF. Other departments supported child care in an indirect way but there was no mechanism to coordinate activities. The Secretary of State funded projects at the regional level but any coordination was by accident. There may have been some overlap with National Welfare grants, Child Mental Health, NLS, and the Disabled Persons Secretariat which all had a research mandate although the National Welfare grants got out of funding child care research.

All lines of evidence point to the conclusion that no service provided by CCIF could be obtained from another source. Provinces could have funded anything CCIF did, but in practice they have not.

Program Results

- B1.** **Given the broadly stated primary goal of CCIF - "to enhance the quality of child care in Canada" - what has been the net impact of CCIF over the past seven years on (i) improvements in across-the-board quality standards of child care; and (ii) improvements in quality programming and availability of diverse child care models?**

Because the provinces are responsible for child care programs, CCIF could have no direct effect on quality standards. CCIF staff maintained that the program had an indirect effect, however. According to CCIF staff, largely due to CCIF, there is now a good base of information and easy access to it. The dissemination of information across the country made everyone aware of the quality issue. The information contributed to policy decisions and the debate around what constitutes quality child care. "CCIF was particularly influential in terms of quality care because now people are talking about national standards and quality is now commonly defined."

All but one NGO representative and four of the six provincial officials asserted that CCIF had an impact on quality standards for child care: some characterized the impact as significant. Provinces thought the main routes to improvement have been through the funding of training and research projects. On the other hand, NGOs believed that quality improvements had been achieved chiefly through increasing awareness. CCIF brought to light "what quality child care means" and heightened awareness about the importance of quality; through this it helped to raise standards of quality in Canada. The projects funded were said to have brought forward relevant issues, highlighted quality child care in many child care settings, allowed communities to experiment with different models of care, helped promote proper training of staff, encouraged the appreciation of quality care on reserves, supported Canadian child care research, and provided opportunities for people in the field to share their expertise and knowledge and to offer support and encouragement to others. On the negative side, "Now people know what standards are but there is no money to implement them."

Survey respondents felt that quality of care had improved slightly or greatly since 1988 in all areas with the exceptions of extended care, emergency care and employer supported care. They thought the biggest improvements took place in the areas of

Aboriginal/Inuit care, care for disabled children, parent resource centres, and community-based care.

CCIF was not thought to have augmented availability of child care to any great extent, primarily because this is not within their mandate. Many new models were tested, but many if not most fell by the wayside when funding ended.

B2. Did CCIF maximize the distribution of its funds to the most deserving and/or most promising projects and recipients? Was there a systematic identification of knowledge gaps and of service needs, and a consequent pro-active enlisting of projects? Or was the selection process more open and mostly reactive? What data were used to support decisions about priority needs? What criteria were used to deny funding to applicants, and what was the rate of refusal?

Besides designating priority areas related to the child care needs of families in unusual circumstances or in under-served areas, CCIF did little or nothing to identify knowledge gaps or service needs and direct funding to those areas. According to CCIF staff, there was no concerted effort to address one priority more than another. CCIF always did a mix of types of projects. "There were no allocations to priorities -- CCIF was reactive." Activity areas depended on provincial and community needs.

No data were used to support decisions about priority needs. Only in the last two years did the program take note of areas that hadn't been funded very much such as rural care and school-aged care, and begin to focus on them.

B3, B4, B5. To what extent was the actual distribution of funds and CCIF support for projects consistent with the program's intended priorities and targeted activities namely (i) Applied Research, (ii) Developmental Activities; and (iii) Demonstration Projects? What was the distribution of CCIF projects and what was the proportion of the CCIF budget as allocated among the stated priority child care "problem areas"? What was the distribution of funds and number of projects by class of recipients?

Research accounted for only 9% of CCIF expenditures. Three in every five dollars were expended on development projects; another 30% was spent on demonstration projects. Given CCIF's objective "to monitor, promote, (and) encourage quality child care in Canada by funding innovative research and development projects," surprisingly little attention was given to research.

Table 3.10 lists the distribution by priority area. To highlight: work related projects received 5% of the funding; aboriginal projects got about 15% of the money; special need projects got 8%; and resource centres got 5%.

Table 3.11 shows number of projects and distribution of CCIF funding by class of recipients. The greatest amount of funding (21%) went to educational institutions, followed by associations/societies (20%), and national associations (13%). Native organizations received 18% of the money. Community groups got 5% of the money, provincial agencies got 2%, municipal agencies got 2%, and child care providers got 8%.

B6. Who were the main beneficiaries, direct and indirect? Number of clients by type, whether child care providers, colleges, associations, children, etc.? How many people were served by the projects by priority target group?

Over half the projects targeted no specific group (see Table 3.12). Of those with a target group, most were aimed at natives. There were also a significant number of special needs and school-age projects. Most projects (86%) reported that they served no one directly (this would be the case for most research and development projects). Of those projects that served people directly, native projects served an average of 1,843 people, non-native projects 965.

B7. To what extent, and in what specific areas, has the stock of knowledge regarding quality child care increased as a result of CCIF applied research projects? Have research project results been summarized and documented in a systematic fashion? To what extent and in what way were the findings and conclusions of the applied research projects shared and disseminated throughout the

day care community? Is there evidence of application of the new knowledge resulting from CCIF funded Applied Research Projects in specific areas, in service delivery, and in policy development?

Commenting on CCIF's effects on child care research, interviewees opined that "only the surface has been scratched." Administrative data showed that there were only 26 projects¹⁸ (5% of all projects) considered research according to "project type." And these few projects covered a wide range of subjects including school-aged care, health care in child care centres, parental preferences, child care worker views, infant care, employer supported care, learning disabilities in centres, evaluations of child care models, aboriginal care, and minority child care. Among the kinds of projects undertaken under the rubric of research were surveys, secondary analysis of survey data, evaluations, feasibility studies, model testing, literature reviews, symposia, and information networks.

Asked what child care issues research projects were designed to address, survey respondents answered availability of child care (47%), quality of child care (42%), caregiver training (38%), general demand for care (36%), needs assessments (34%), flexible models (31%) and other issues as listed in Table 6.4.

There is a synopsis of projects in a catalogue of resources but no analysis has been done. There was no conscious effort to analyze the results of projects in one area (rural care, for example) to find the overall lessons learned.

About one-quarter of the research projects were published in specialized journals such as *Focus*, the *Canadian Journal of Health* and the *Canadian Journal of Research in ECE*, boosting potential relevance greatly, and suggesting that the quality was high. The percentage of research projects so published may be overestimated, however, since few of the respondents specified the journal and some who did named a newsletter or booklet. Most of the other projects used pamphlets, conferences or workshops to circulate their findings. Nine in ten maintained that the research findings are available to people wishing to obtain them.

¹⁸

Other codes on the administrative system showed that 53 projects involved some research.

Over 73% of research project representatives surveyed said their findings had been used. The following types of institutions were said to have used the projects' research findings:

Evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund

<u>Institution</u>	<u>% of Projects</u>
School/school board	24.5%
Post-secondary institution	35.3
Municipal government	12.7
Provincial government	39.2
Federal government	20.6
Tribal council/Indian band	17.6
Child care organizations	54.9
Caregiver associations	28.4
Community groups	25.5
Public libraries	10.8
Other researchers	28.4
Other	12.7

N=77

- B8.** **As a result of CCIF funding of Demonstration Projects and models of service to support new and innovative approaches to meet child care needs in formerly underserved/underresourced communities - was there a significant increase in relevant tested models and availability of new child care opportunities for these communities? To what extent has the availability and quality of child care in these aforementioned underserved communities improved? How much of this improvement is due to CCIF efforts? How successful or effective were the Demonstration Projects, models of service in particular? What proportion of these projects are still ongoing? Main source of funding after CCIF? What proportion received other funding in addition to that from CCIF? How many clients have been served through the demonstration projects by target group? What has been the impact of these CCIF funded Demonstration Projects? What "lessons have been learned" through support of these Demonstration Projects? Is there evidence of "spin-offs", or further applications of the lessons learned? To what extent, and in what ways, were the results of the Demonstration Projects (models of service) shared and communicated throughout the day care community and to other interested parties? Was the dissemination strategy effective?**

Most CCIF staff and provincial representatives stated that CCIF had little or no impact on the availability of child care services in Canada, but hastened to add this was not its purpose. There was one exception to this as noted by several interviewees: the program created child care where otherwise there would have been none for on-reserve

aboriginals, and Inuit. CCIF was also said to have increased spaces for off-reserve aboriginals.

According to CCIF respondents, many demonstration projects were testing new models of service. "CCIF tried everything except a fully comprehensive service." For instance, resource centres were developed through demonstration projects. In some cases, rural models were developed which affected availability in those areas.

In total 60 different communities across Canada had CCIF demonstration projects. Every province but Newfoundland had demonstration projects. Leading the way was British Columbia with 15 such projects, followed by Quebec with 10. About four in ten of these projects received funding from other sources in addition to CCIF.

There was the point of view within CCIF and some NGOs that the program helped create new services through feasibility studies and demonstration projects. Survey and self-evaluation data suggest that 85% of demonstration projects continued after CCIF funding expired. But most did not continue for long. Within one year, only 54% were still operating. And by the time the CCIF program ended, only 46% of demonstration projects were still in operation.

Most projects that continued after CCIF secured funding from the provincial government, although not enough to operate as before. Our case studies showed that even the most successful on-going projects could shut down at any time because of insufficient funds.

Three-quarters of demonstration projects surveyed had been visited by people interested in developing a similar program. One project representative asserted that 900 people had visited for this purpose; another claimed 250 people had visited; and six others said that over 100 people did so. The average (mean) number of people visiting was 71, the median number 25. And perhaps the ultimate compliment to the project and measure of usefulness of the project was that 39% of the models of service tested by the demonstration projects were adopted by another organization or individual, according to respondents.

Among the lessons learned from demonstration projects:

- If a program is going to fund these projects there should be a clear understanding with the province. CCIF should have explained the intent more clearly to the provinces and should only have solicited such projects after consultation with the province.
- Frequent on-site monitoring and support is needed for these projects so that the groups feel the program is providing support rather than just policing.
- Demonstration projects provided a good basis for the design of the new first nations direct service initiative and will drive the design of how funding will flow.
- It is important to have independent evaluators assess at least some of the larger demonstration projects.

The most popular means of disseminating findings of demonstration projects was through workshops or seminars. Conferences were also used by over half the projects. Nearly one-quarter claimed that their findings had been published in specialized journals such as *Infoparents* and *Canadian Parents*. About one in eight demonstration projects never disseminated their results (though some of these had just submitted their results for publication). Nearly 23% of respondents did not know whether CCIF disseminated information about their demonstration project. Of those who did, most thought CCIF was very (22%) or somewhat helpful (42%) in disseminating results. But 20% said CCIF was of very little help and 16% said it was no help at all.

- B9.** **In what ways, and to what extent has the CCIF contributed to strengthening the Child Care "infrastructure" - that is encouraging maturation of child care organization? enhancing professionalism? improving the linkages and information exchanges within the formal child care field? What proportion of CCIF funds and projects were directed toward staff training and workshops? What proportion to conferences? and to any other types of activities funded under "Development"? To what extent would these projects/activities have proceeded without CCIF assistance? What was the coverage afforded through these Development projects/activities? Who benefited? To what extent have the training needs of service providers been met through CCIF Development projects?**

According to CCIF staff, the key activities undertaken to strengthen the child care infrastructure were:

- Helping create an infrastructure -- CCIF invested in every national organization. It funded a lot of groups and solidified the system of information exchange.
- Networking -- The program linked organizations, especially through conferences.
- Resource centres -- CCIF supported activities through the creation of resource centres. It also enhanced centres to bring in new services such as the creation of a registry of available child care services to be used by employers.
- Individual projects -- CCIF supported projects dealing with training and professional development. Dissemination of the end products was aimed at informing child care professionals and parents.

CCIF interviewees claimed three main effects of these efforts on child care organizations. First, CCIF was said to be particularly successful in seeding organizations which defend the interests of certain groups and create information. Second, CCIF funding was said to have allowed some organizations to network and to have a stronger voice. As a result, some child care organizations became better organized, polished and focused. Third, the staff held that funded activities have increased the visibility of organizations, which has placed more demands on them and given them more responsibility. These effects have broadened organizations' outlook. The activities, especially the conferences, have also developed professionalism among workers. They made them aware of different approaches and fostered pride in their profession.

"CCIF had quite a significant impact on the professionalism of staff." The organizations have done a lot of training and professional development activities. Workers are involved in the network. "Support has given them a sense of profession even though the pay is low. The turnover rate is very low." Also, CCIF supported a large wages and working conditions study which was widely acclaimed for the information it provided.

CCIF staff made the following case for the effect of the program on linkages and exchange of information. The program brought a national perspective and provided

support to national organizations. It produced tangible goods such as training manuals. CCIF empowered organizations and pulled them together. A lot of linkages have been developed resulting in a good exchange of information both within the provinces and nationally. Through CCIF it has been possible to establish regional organizations that are a vital component of the system. CCIF was able to give them information regarding Canadian resources, to support conferences and bring in caregivers, to form support groups, to assist in funding of newsletters, etc. Through these means, CCIF has facilitated information exchange. Survey respondents also believed that CCIF was effective or very effective at improving the infrastructure. Over 80% of respondents thought the program was effective at establishing a process for exchange of information, at improving information sharing in the child care community, and at improving linkages in the child care community.

Many provincial and NGO interviewees thought CCIF activities had helped to spawn and support child care organizations, to erect a network of agencies and individuals involved in child care, to build a body of knowledge, to increase community awareness, to increase sharing of ideas and information, and to enhance the professionalism for child care staff.

Conferences were denominated a priority area of 9.5% of projects, receiving 1.5% of the funding. Training was the primary activity of 14.8% of projects, receiving 19.7% of funding. There is no designation for workshops on CIS. In total, 72% of CCIF projects were classified development, accounting for 60.3% of funding.

As with other type of projects, very few development projects would have proceeded without CCIF assistance, according to interviewees and case study respondents. Nine in ten respondents held that their project could not have been undertaken without funding from CCIF.

CCIF made a significant impact on training, according to interviewees. Via support of projects focusing on bettering training (e.g., highlighting major gaps in training programs), and conferences and workshops on the subject, CCIF has had a positive influence on training. They also felt that CCIF had a beneficial impact on working

conditions by raising the awareness of the need for professionalism which should be accorded to child care providers.

B10. Has CCIF contributed to raising the professional standards and/or credentials of child care givers? to improving their working conditions? (any influence on provincial policies?)

Most CCIF staff were of the opinion that it was not possible to attribute changes in provincial standards directly to CCIF. They did believe that they were just beginning to have a positive, indirect impact on provincial standards, however, especially in the area of licensing requirements.

The degree of perceived impact depended on the province. CCIF staff held that some provinces (e.g., Ontario) had good standards before CCIF, and hence the impact of the program on standards has been minimal. In other provinces -- mainly the Maritimes -- the effect has been more substantial. Training standards were said to have improved in Saskatchewan, in part because of the Meadow Lake project.

NGO interviewees felt that CCIF had a beneficial impact on working conditions by raising the awareness of the need for professionalism which should be accorded to child care providers. But CCIF staff claimed the program had little or no impact on working conditions. The provinces' verdict was split on CCIF's impact. Two provinces said CCIF had no impact. The other four thought CCIF deserved credit for improving professional standards and working conditions. They ascribed the positive effects to projects centered around training and working conditions, and research projects.

Survey respondents were also equivocal. About 63% thought CCIF was very effective or effective in improving working conditions of child care providers. But the other 37% said it was ineffective or very ineffective at this.

B11. What are the "end products" developed through CCIF projects to enhance information, education and public awareness about quality

child care? To whom have these "products" been disseminated and how?

Table 5.2 lists the end products developed through CCIF projects. Final reports accounted for 63% of the end products, publications for 32%, and audio-video products for only 5% of projects. The plurality (25%) of end products focused on professional development/training of child care staff. About 12% were aimed at parent education, and 12% were research reports or publications.

According to the survey, the main products or services developed by these projects to enhance information sharing were written materials (59%). Other products or services were as follows:

<u>Product/Service</u>	<u>% of Projects</u>
Resource centre	32.6%
Toy lending library	16.5
Written material	59.3
Audio/visual material	25.6
Telephone hot line	7.0
Other ^a	11.8

N=86

^a e.g., database, training plan, promotional materials

When asked about the primary purpose of the products, respondents reported that no single purpose predominated: 29% of projects aimed to provide parent education or support; 23% furnished caregiver training; 19% were meant to improve program resources; and 13% provided caregiver support. The other 16% cited other products or services such as policy development, educator support, and design of child care facilities.

Most often used means for dissemination were workshops/seminars (60% of information dissemination projects) and publishing for general use (57%). Another 44% presented their results at a conference, and 29% published their findings in a specialized journal.

B12. Was the CCIF successful in collecting and summarizing results of projects funded? In increasing the flow of information, and awareness of resources available? Was CCIF successful in establishing an efficient process for exchange of information?

As mentioned above, there is a synopsis of projects in a catalogue of resources but no analysis has been done. CCIF funded the Canadian Child Care Federation to produce a book that summarized certain projects. They produced two publications -- one short and another with a one-page description of those projects that had findings or results. The publications were circulated to child care organizations, provincial governments, universities/colleges and larger resource centres and libraries.

Most informants held that CCIF certainly increased the amount of information available, but they were less certain about the flow of information. Many thought the flow had increased, but not as much as it could have had distribution of results been better.

All CCIF staff and all but one NGO representative were in agreement that CCIF had had a considerable impact on awareness of available resources. Prior to the program, there were few resources available and what was there was known only locally. "CCIF has had a great impact on awareness -- there is now one network in the community although there is still much to be done."

Findings from the survey support this. About 95% of respondents held that CCIF was effective or very effective at increasing awareness of available resources.

Also from the survey, 33% said CCIF was very effective in establishing a process for exchange of information; 49% said it was effective.

B13. How appropriate, timely, and useful are these "end products" for service providers, for policy makers, for general public and parents? Is there any duplication in the materials produced? What gaps in needed information and data still exist?

Interviewees were asked how useful the end products were for policy makers, service providers, and parents. There were two basic responses provided by CCIF staff. One was that no one really knew how useful the end products were since there had been no systematic analysis of the end products. By this school of thought, there was plenty of useful information available to parents, service providers, and policy makers, but how much it was used was unknown. Some CCIF staff were dubious that the information was reaching parents. The same group were doubtful that much of the information, though potentially valuable, was used by policy-makers, especially at the provincial level.

The more common point of view on the usefulness of end products was "It depends on the project." Some end products were adjudged very useful, principally for service providers. Some end products, particularly national research studies, were considered to be valuable input into the child care policy-making process. And this group thought that

"Parents are a lot more aware of what's out there" in terms of child care and could make more informed choices.

Because project results are usually not widely disseminated, the potential for duplication is heightened. We uncovered some evidence of duplication.

Only one example of duplication of information was given by interviewees. The report produced by the Child Care Federation is somewhat like a status of child care which duplicates a document put out in-house. "However, this doesn't often happen and steps have been taken to rationalize such activities." Another informant said that feasibility studies got to a point where they were "reinventing the wheel," an important reason to stop funding such projects.

As well, the peer reviewers said the Hub Model and the Workplace Day Care projects were concerned with developing child care models that had already been studied and written about. Consequently neither of these projects was judged to have added much to the existing stock of knowledge. This finding suggests that if a more rigorous review of the proposals had been carried out, the duplication of the planned projects with existing knowledge could have been identified, and the problems with these projects avoided.

All informants attested that there are a lot of gaps in information. CCIF staff said there is a need to do more evaluation of the current services, programs and practices -- whether they are appropriate and cost-effective and whether they meet the need. Research needs to be done in the determinants of quality care, standards of care, quality of child care services in disadvantaged areas, school-based care, and in special groups such as infant/toddler care. There needs to be more studies around employer practices, leave, family/work balance, self-employment, non-traditional hours and the impact they will have on child rearing and what services can meet those non-traditional needs. More knowledge is needed regarding comprehensive services and there is a need to know how commercial child care compares with non-profit. Second order questions will also probably be needed e.g., factors affecting preferences by area as well as by age of child.

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According to the provinces, the principal area in which more knowledge is needed was said to be "quality." Different provinces emphasized different areas of quality. One province saw a general need for more information on quality and how to get it and sustain it. Another was much more specific, arguing that the key issue to explore is what difference does quality child care make on the rearing of children versus care provided by family. A third listed three important issues involving quality: a need to better understand the cost versus quality relationship; a need to take a hard look at reducing costs without eroding quality; and a need to look at whether current regulations are affecting quality.

NGO informants listed many different areas where more knowledge is necessary. Six mentioned multicultural issues -- a need to understand the needs of a community and what is culturally appropriate (especially for Aborigines). Three thought more work was needed in the area of training and curriculum development. Two called for more research into behavioural problems of children (e.g., fetal alcohol syndrome). No other area was raised by more than one person.

Peer reviewers reported that there were still gaps in the knowledge necessary for improving the quality of child care, although four of the reviewers pointed out that to some extent part of the problem is the failure to apply knowledge already available, not a lack of knowledge. The following gaps were identified: designing effective training programs; defining and measuring quality of care; organization of child care centres; integration of special needs children; relationship between director characteristics and training and quality; and defining "quality of care" in an aboriginal context.

Program Alternatives

- C1, C2.** Is it feasible and/or desirable to integrate the Child Care Initiatives Fund program with other related programs? Should the "partnership" aspects of providing quality child care be expanded to a more comprehensive and broader vision, namely providing a community-based, integrative support for families? Should elements of the CCIF be rolled into a range of other related child development services?

Many CCIF interviewees thought in terms of what specific components of CCIF might be housed in other programs. Three thought that universities could take over the research component, although they worried that universities "would not have the national picture so it would still need (overarching) coordination of research." Three others thought that R&D could be handled through the National Welfare Grants. Another popular idea was to farm out information dissemination to the Child Care Federation. Their work parallels that of the Child Care Information Centre. One consultant thought that regional agencies could do information sharing.

Provincial interviewees were vague in their response. No other organization was specified that could take responsibility for any CCIF activity. And no government program was named that could integrate any CCIF activity. Provincial officials tended to think that some aspects -- information dissemination was mentioned -- could be handled by the private sector. Interestingly, none said their province would take up any of the slack.

Most NGO respondents saw no reason why CCIF activities could not be integrated into other programs. Some thought the activities could be undertaken by other branches of the federal government: Headstart and the Brighter Futures program were given as examples. One person said provincial governments could assume some of the responsibilities by modeling their services after the CCIF design. One mused that "an excellent way of operating a fund granting body for child care would be as a foundation" based around an organization with a history in children and youth services. It would need public funding, however.

Regardless of what agencies might take over components of CCIF, CCIF and NGO informants advanced two central considerations. Most warned that the child care focus should not be diluted in any new program. And many cautioned that national funding should be continued to ensure a national focus and to help shape the child care agenda. "Any contribution program could probably be integrated with CCIF but you would probably lose the child care focus. . . It would become a fight for funding. If the program

is going to be integrated into anything, it will be necessary to look at all the programs and have a bigger picture."

- C3. Are there more cost-effective ways to deliver this program, and/or to address the issues and needs of quality child care? What other funding mechanisms might be more effective? How does the present CCIF approach compare with other countries' schemes or models to provide quality child care (U.S., Europe, Scandinavia, etc.)?**

A few ideas were advanced by CCIF staff as alternatives for addressing quality child care. Four brought up the concept of community-based, integrated family services. Two provinces agreed that this concept had promise. "A community-based approach may be cheaper and more effective. (The advantages of this approach include) more efficiency, less expense because of cost-sharing and it may encourage people to access available services. However, this approach needs cooperation between all organizations who may be afraid to lose turf. . . It also needs the cooperation of the province." The federal government would have an indirect role in such a model since service delivery is a provincial responsibility. Services have to be community-based so the role of the federal government is funding and providing some national guidelines. "It is also necessary to support the strengthening of professional resources in communities so they themselves can provide advice and guidance. It is essential to do things in a systematic way at the regional level."

Another idea was for the federal government to set national standards for quality. "If the federal government would take the lead role in developing national standards for quality, education and training, then Canada would have a comprehensive child care system." Similarly, one provincial official suggested implementation of a national child care strategy to provide a coordinated and consolidated approach to child care.

A final idea advanced by CCIF staff was to work out a consortium with private organizations to approach provincial governments to contribute to a national fund that may be administered by an organization.

Another interesting suggestion from a provincial official was that CCIF could operate more effectively if it worked in a more committee-like format in directing the flow of funds into child care across the country. Incorporating the expertise and work of researchers and experts in its funding process, this more structured approach would permit more significant long term regional planning to take place and prevent projects from being done pell-mell.

Survey respondents were asked whether CCIF was the best mechanism by which the issues and needs of promoting quality child care may be addressed. Three-quarters said yes. Most of those who said no thought that professional organizations would have been superior.

Child care models in France, Denmark and Sweden are often cited as among the best in the world. These three countries have established an extensive child care system integrated with broader family policies to accommodate the needs of parents and children with active support from the central government. In each of the countries, the majority of child care services is provided with public funding and is operated by local governments or approved private organizations.

Governments in the three European countries play a larger role in the development of services than does the Canadian government. In Sweden, for instance, the National Board of Health and Welfare issues guidelines to ensure that municipal centre based child care meets certain quality requirements. In Denmark, child care is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs; in France, écoles maternelles are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Education while care for younger children is the responsibility of the Ministry of Solidarity, Health and Social Protection. In Canada, the central government has no direct responsibility for the development and delivery of child care nor for regulating the quality of care. Rather these tasks fall to the provincial/territorial governments, each of which have different philosophies and different fiscal capabilities.

There are notable differences between Canada and the United States in the delivery of child care. In the United States, for example, the private sector owns and operates a much higher percentage of child care centres than in Canada. In terms of policy,

however, the United States and Canada resemble each other. Neither country has enacted national child care policies, has a national system of programs, or has a funding mechanism for universal coverage.

C4. Does the present approach of CCIF support the attainment of meaningful results? Or should the number of projects be more limited with a stronger concentration on selected, key priority areas?

Most informants agreed that CCIF played a necessary and valuable role during its seven year mandate, but it is now time to move on. CCIF must build on the experience they have amassed. Because there is much less money, the program has to be more strategic and needs to be better at consultation with the field. CCIF responded to what came in; a new program should be more proactive and more focused on research. Target areas should be determined after a review of what has been achieved and where the gaps are. The program should completely back away from needs assessment and feasibility studies. The people administering the program would need to have new skills (i.e., research skills).

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APPENDIX A

List of Technical Reports

List of Technical Reports

Available under separate cover from HRDC Program Evaluation are the following technical reports:

- 1) Analysis of Administrative Data
- 2) Literature Review
- 3) Key Informant Interviews
- 4) Peer Review
- 5) Survey of Project Sponsors
- 6) Case Studies

APPENDIX B

List of Informants

Evaluation of the Child Care Initiatives Fund

CCIF Staff and Other Individuals Knowledgeable about CCIF

<i>Director General</i>	Don Ogston
<i>Director</i>	Ron Yzerman
<i>Regional Consultants</i>	Francine Knoops, Natives (on-reserve) Penny Hammell, Atlantic Helene Cloutier, Quebec Begona Llames, Ontario and National Janice Durston, Manitoba and Saskatchewan Marg Shawana, Alberta and B.C. Marie McCue, Territories and Off-reserve Natives
<i>Child & Family Task Team</i>	Lynn Westlake, Policy Analyst

Provincial/Territorial Government Representatives

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